

George Adair
THE

P A O K E T:

A

N O V E L.

BY MISS GUNNING.

VOL. I.

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THE
P A C K E T.
William Street Station

C H A P. I.

*Introductory—A short reflection—A short appeal
—A short recommendation, and a short conclusion.*

WHOEVER has the condescension to honour these pages with a perusal, let them not toss away the inoffensive volume with disgust, because the first characters I shall introduce to their acquaintance happen to be a little lower in the scale of rank than themselves—very much lower I should have said; for I shall begin my history, when I do begin it, with a couple of God's good creatures, so simple, so natural, as makes me tremble for the reception they may meet with in their career through high life.

IN the circles of high life I know my book will be read, if only for the novelty-sake of *that* name which has already afforded my *dear friends* a great deal of subject for conversation, and, by their own devices, as much delight as can arise from the ingenious fabrications of treachery, falsehoods, and malevolence.

IF I am not always able to throw a bridle over my pen, it will not be the fault of my inclinations—I would do it if I could :—a candid reader, who has experienced how difficult it is to controul the emotions of the mind at all seasons, will say the task is too hard, and acquit me on the score of impracticability.

THIS chapter being meant as a sort of preface to my stupendous undertaking, and to bespeak the clemency of readers under every description for my favourite old couple, Sarah and Richard Adams, I shall cut short all further compliments to enter on the drudgery of business.



C H A P. II.

A wood—A castle—Bounty to old age recommended by the example of Sir Thomas and Lady Gertrude Montreville—The labourer, his wife, and the packet.

VENERABLE was the wood—intricate its mazes—smiling its verdure—friendly the solemn shade with which it was every ready to embower the curious or the weary traveller:—Yes, beautiful and venerable was the wood, through which Richard and his wife Sarah were passing in their way homewards, and where they met with an adventure, which, though it may not seem to promise much, is nevertheless worthy of bearing record to their honesty, and serving as a test of what I have before advanced, that they really were two of God's good creatures.

My venerable wood leads to the entrance of a stately castle in one of the western counties of this kingdom, and with the elegant owners of which superb mansion you are, if you please, to suppose me on a very good footing; or how is it otherwise to be accounted for, that I became possessed of their histories. with permission to make them public?

RICHARD

RICHARD and Sarah Adams were old labourers, and would have been poor ones too, if they had not found constant employment in the castle gardens, and received from the liberality of Sir Thomas and Lady Gertrude Montreville daily wages, not measured out by the judgment of a task-master, according to their strength and abilities, but in exact proportion to their age and necessities. This benevolent idea was not confined merely to accommodate my old couple ; it was an established custom at the castle, to reward the exertions to labour, however feeble time and grey hairs might render the attempt, even more than labour itself, where avarice, in all her strictness, could mark out no such impediment.

THROUGH this wood, which I have been perhaps to no purpose endeavouring to celebrate, Richard and Sarah Adams, harmless and contented as the first pair in Paradise before their fall, were returning to their homely habitation, when it occurred to their recollection, they were that night to regale themselves with milk pottage for their suppers.—Often, in the very happiest of my days, I have regaled on the same supper ; and can therefore recommend it as a good one.

BUT where is the adventure?—I am coming to that presently.

RICHARD and Sarah, having luckily thought of their evening repast, stooped down to gather, if any yet appeared, the tender buds of the delicious scented pennyroyal ; a certain herb so necessary to the composition they meditated, that without its
flavour

flavour their pottage would have been insipid. They found it just raising up its pale green head from the lap of earth, and spreading its branches in wild luxuriosity at the foot of a tall majestic tree, that seemed proud to shelter the humble herb, so useful to the children of poverty.

Whilst on their knees, searching out this rare vegetable, and tenderly plucking it from the stalk, that the roots might not be injured, they found the very Packet that is answerable for the title of my labours. The bad state of preservation in which it was taken up was a melancholy proof that it must have lain many months in the place, where it had been sunk, and in some degree sheltered, or it must have been utterly destroyed. Its snug recess was at the bottom of a high and thick tuft of grass, which, for this one good deed, I hope will never be cut down, and that blessings may continue to light on the heads of Richard and Sarah, as being the means of bringing it to light; for, had the packet been quite decayed, or never discovered, what could I have done without it?

It was tied round with several folds of black ribbon, and there was some writing on the outside. Now, instead of not being able to write *well*, which may sometimes be the misfortune of their *better*s, it so happened that neither of these illiterate labourers, into whose hands the packet fell, could neither write or read at all, which threw them into a grand puzzle, as I have since heard from themselves, when they gave me their own simple narrative of the whole

whole transaction. How I came to be so much in their confidence, demands to be explained.

WHEN there are striking events in the lives of great and good people, whose examples may improve, or whose precepts may enlighten society, it is certainly for the benefit of mankind that such events and such examples should be transmitted to posterity: I have therefore collected all the necessary materials for what I am about, and, amongst the rest, did not omit to call on Richard and Sarah Adams.

I HAD other motives for my visit to the old couple, beside curiosity, and the wish of information; I honoured their conduct, and felt that I should be gratified in seeing them rejoice in the rewards by which it was attended.

RICHARD and Sarah, when I had the honour of being admitted to their presence, were not surrounded by a circle of grandees, or listening to the many pretty flattering tales that are always ready for the entertainment of prosperity and her children: they were cultivating their little garden, merely for amusement and health's sake, having no longer occasion to earn their wholesome brown bread by the sweat of their brows; for, as I have hinted already, their honesty had been crowned by the hand of benevolence with its due reward.

THEY were in the actual receipt of fifty pounds a-year, quite as large a sum to them as any lord's fifty thousand per annum is to him; every man's
wants

wants being proportioned to his means, and sometimes even beyond them.

FORTUNE, when heaping upon Richard and Sarah these capital marks of her bounty, did not take from them what was a thousand times more valuable than the very best of her gifts, but left them in possession of their peace, their innocence, and their humility. Their rest was never disturbed by plotting how they should make their fifties into hundreds; their rectitude was never sacrificed to temptation; or their humble thoughts ever lifted above their neighbours by the breath of vanity: their residence had received no embellishments from the improvers of nature—their manners no grace from the polish of ton—or their language any advantage from Mr. Sheridan's dictionary.

MERELY then for amusement and health's sake were these happy people working in their little garden, when I entered it through a small wicket, over which was turned a fragrant arch of roses, honey-suckles and sweet-briar. As I approached them unexpected and unobserved, I was got quite near before they saw me. Richard, then resting on his spade, took off his hat with a motion of more civility than politeness:—he recollected me in a moment to come from the castle—not by remembering my face, but by the Montreville livery, one of Lady Gertrude's servants having attended me. Sarah who was weeding a border of pinks and heart's-ease, started hastily up from her knees, shook her petticoats, brushed the dust from her apron, and, making one of her best

B 5

curtsies,

curtsies, joined with the old man in giving me a coarse but very hearty welcome.

No sooner had I told them the principal motive of my visit, than they bestowed a thousand blessings on the friends for whom I was interested, and consented to answer all my questions, if my ladyship would be so well pleased to sit down and rest a while in their best kitchen.

I AM never so well pleased, or so well paid, when I comply with a request made by an exalted petitioner, as I am when it is in my power to gratify the wishes of the humble—So I not only suffered them to conduct me to their best kitchen, but accepted a glass of excellent mead from the hands of my sun-burnt entertainers. The conversation that afterwards passed between us I reserve for another chapter, when I shall call on Richard and Sarah Adams to tell my readers, in their own singular language, so many of the circumstances belonging to their good luck in finding the packet, as shall at least answer the purpose of making you smile, if it does not give you much additional information.

C H A P. III.

*There are more ways of telling a story than one—
Jealousy never out of season, or a Divine so
composed but his composure may be shaken—
Duties of silence enforced—A poor man's re-
ceipt for making his bed of roses, even in the
bleak month of December.*

WASEN it in December, Richard, that this
same God-send vell into our hands? I thinks it was
there or thereabouts.

FOR the matter of that, Sari, it may be as you
fais, or it may be not—Why 'tis going on three years
since we picked up the packet; and who can
remember so long back to be sartain zure as to the
very time?

I ADJUSTED this matter, by telling them I knew
it was found by them in December; and desiring
they would proceed—

YES, yes, it is as young madam do fay, for I
does now call to mind it was despart coald, and that
a spankling of snaw had been a coming down all
day, which made my Sari cry out when we virst zeed
the paper in the bottom of the grafs, that it was
nothing

nothing in the world but a patch of snaw, and did seem to think it worth looking a'ter.

THE worse our luck if you had not been wiser than I—vor all the snaw in the king's land wodn't have made up our loss, had you hearkened to me, and zo left it behind us.—Oh the wonderful works of nature! that God Almighty should trouble his head about such poor folks as we be!

SARTAIN zure it is, that he do consarn his self about the poor and the needy, or it wod never have been put down zo in the scriptures, where every thing is as true as that you are alive.

I THANK God, cried I, that he put it into your hearts not to go away without the packet!—but when you had got it, what did you do then?

NOTHING, Miss; I was like one struck—and zo vor the matter of that was Sari. We did nothing but wonder how it comed there, and stared at one another!—I thoht it must belong to somebody, zeeing it was such a big letter.

I MIND, too, Richard, when I tooked it up, and gid it to you, how you tilted it up and down, zaying, there was sartainly money in it, by the reason it would weigh down forty or fifty shillings.

AND yet, said I, you did not open it, to see what quantity of gold or silver it might contain, or wish to keep it for your own use?

God

GOD forbid, my lady!—No, if we had been starving, I wodn't have done *that*.—More or less a right owner there must be vor it, and I wod have carried it to him if I had knowed whereabouts he lived, but for want of larning codn't find out where to look a'ter him.

WELL, then, you knows Richard, I parsuarded you to carry it to the clerk of our parish, that he might zee into it.—I'm zure I never shan't forgit *that*; vor when I zaid the clerk was a larned man, and knowed every body for the the vally of three or four parishes round abouts, and was likely to tell us who the letter with writing on the outside did belong to——

HERE she was suddenly and eagerly interrrupted by her husband.

ZAY no more, zay no more, wife; our differing about a trifle do not signify nothing to her ladyship.

I HAD a little scratching of curiosity at my heart to know what was the difference he seemed so fearful that I should be informed of; and in my own mind placed it to every possible account except the right one; for, who would ever have thought that jealousy could creep into a heart at seventy-five—and for an object only fifteen years younger than himself?

SARAH left me but a short time under the influence of error, for whether she did not hear, or did not heed Richard's request, that she would be silent as

to the difference that had fallen out between them, nothing could stop the progress of her story ; and I was so much diverted with her manner of telling it, that I am determined it shall not undergo the slightest alteration from my pen.

I ZAY, Richard, I shall never forget how, when I opposed the clerk as a larned man, you twited me, and zaid it was unproper vor honest women to think any body larned zave their own help-mates. Now, patience guide me ! I was, to be zure, in a despard passion ; because the clerk was no more to me in the way of sweethearting, than the parson his own self, or the lord-mayor of Coventry.

SARI, Sari, cried the old man impatiently, is this discourse fit to pleasure madam ?—Suppose we did bicker a bit, we made it up again ; and didn't I tell thee I had no objection to the clerk ? only I tho't his honour, Parson Armatage, was the better man, being, by the will of God, a justice of the peace, and ready at all times to sarve the poor as well as the rich, let in be in pulpit or parlour, all's one for that.

'Tis all true, my lady, directing her answer to me ; and then Richard can't but zay that I was as much vor the parson as I was bevore vor the clerk, only I tho't it would be making too bold with his reverence.—Howfomedever, I agreed to what Richard zaid, and away he went to the parsonage that very night, tho' it was two miles and more backwards and forwards out of our straight road.

I ASKED

I ASKED them what happened when they got there?

HAPPENED, Miss! why I shall never vorgit what happened in all my born days: when he opened the parcel, his honour's back was towards us; the next minute he turned round like a spinning jenny, jumped nighst as high as my apron string; his eyes looked like two balls of fire, and he shaked as thof he had agot the agi! For my share, added Richard, thof we had doned no harm to nobody, it zeemed to me as if we should be both hanged for a plot.

My polite readers, for want of a glossary, may find it difficult to dig out from the provincial rubbish of Richard and Sarah's phrases, in the progress of their narrative, so much as is necessary to be known—I shall therefore take upon me the task of being their translator, for as much as concerns the remaining part of the information I received from their communication.

THE description of their pastor's great surprise when he first opened the packet, is already so well done that I shall not try to mend it; but go on to the next five minutes after he had examined the contents, which, without my assistance, you will conceive to be of great value, by the effects it produced on his whole nervous system.—He rang the bell—Tell your mistress, said he to a servant, I must speak to her this moment. My mistress is gone to the castle, Sir.—True, I was to have met her there, but I had forgot it.—Shall I run and see if I can overtake my lady,

lady, Sir?—No—Yes—No—Yes—No—At last the incoherent sentence ended with Yes, with a sort of half-articulated command, that if Mrs. Armatage was already at the castle, he should not follow her thither to deliver his message.

As soon as the man was gone, he turned to the old couple, as much agitated as before, took them kindly by the hand, and promised he would soon lay hold of the most certain method to convey the parcel where it ought to be delivered. Now, these poor, ignorant, honest souls, knew so little of this wicked world, and the various means by which wickedness is cunningly accomplished, that they never thought of asking who the packet belonged to, or what were its contents; being fully satisfied that they had performed their christian duty, by committing it to the care of their Minister, who, as far as man can judge of man, practised the Gospel himself, as well as preached it to others.

HAVING founded them again and again as to the time, place, and exact situation when, where, and how it had fallen into their hands—Richard and Sarah Adams, said he in a solemn tone calculated to inspire them with attention and obedience, hitherto you have acted uprightly in not coveting to know what is concealed in this paper, and you have also done well in bringing it to me: but of you do not keep every circumstance of the affair to yourselves; if you should betray to man, woman, or child, that you have found such a paper, or that I have got it, you will forfeit my friendship; and the reward I have in view for you, whilst you are silent, shall, if

if you break that silence, be converted to punishment.

With bended bodies, and unlifted hands, they promised faithfully to obey his injunctions. Yes, said he, I depend on your fidelity ; and in keeping the trust you shall be greatly rewarded. Have I not often told you from the pulpit, that no good action goes without its recompence?—I don't know whether the promise of reward, love for their pastor, reverence to his commands, or fear of offending him, made the deepest impression ; but, acting together, produced effects which satisfied him they were to be confided in ; and the servant being come back without seeing his mistress, Mr. Armatage put my old couple under the guardianship of his greyheaded domestic, having first sentenced them to kitchen discipline ; and, adding bounty to hospitality, he slipped a guinea into Richard's hand, again enforcing the duties of silence : and when dismissed from his presence, I must suppose he returned to the contents of the packet, in the same hurry of spirits with which he first developed them. I have heard, indeed, and from good authority, that the oftener he examined this treasure, the more he was agitated—his senses he feared had misled him ; but his fears were mixed with doubt, and that doubt was *hope*.

As to the internal conscience of the divine, who was thus accidentally enriched, I shall not meddle with it at present : if a bad one, the compassionate reader will naturally hope it may in time get better ; and if good, it is as natural to hope that he will
long

long enjoy, in this world, the only companion which he can take with him to the next.

I CANNOT conclude this chapter, without a word or two more of Richard and his wife Sarah, who, being regaled at the parsonage house with the very best it could afford, returned to their turf-covered cottage; where, having a thousand times admired the beauty of their golden guinea, wondered if the king was really so handsome as his picture; and after carefully wrapping it up in many folds of brown paper, side by side, they humbly dropped on their knees, thanking God for the mercies of the day. Thus prepared, by labour and peace of mind, for sound sleep and undisturbed dreams, they laid themselves down on their wholesome bed, which, speaking by the rules of allegory, may not unaptly be called a bed of roses.

C H A P. IV.

A word of intreaty—Clemency recommended—How to know one's self—The castle—An observation that will not please every body, dedicated to those who cannot fail to understand it—With other matters of entertainment not specified

IF any of my readers are so ungracious to find fault with my last chapter, because it presents to them no fine people, no fine houses, no fine equipages, no fine entertainments; I hope to be reconciled to their good graces by that part of the history on which I am now going to enter: none, I am sure, but the ill-natured and ungentle, will persist in condemning the past pages, if, in the future, they can find out any thing that may repay them for their exertions.—Whether you are an ill-natured, ungentle reader, must not be determined by your own verdict: you shall not look for the solution in your mirrors, or your partiality; but search for it in the faces of your fathers, mothers, husbands, children and servants; where, if they are not all flatterers, you will find out nearly, if not exactly, the rank to which, by your good qualities, you may be entitled.

THE epoch at which I am conveying you to the castle of Sir Thomas Montreville, is eighteen months precedent

precedent to the time when Richard and Sarah Adams picked peneroyal, and found the marvellous packet ; which I hope none of you will forget, though it must be a long time before it can be again produced to quicken your recollection.

THE castle presents itself before me. What food does it exhibit for architects—what a regale for amateurs—what a bath of description it is now in my power to serve up, supplied with so many rich ingredients, if, in one only, I had not been deficient ! the Attic salt is wanting, without which I may encrease the mess of words, but can give them no relishing flavour ; and it is for this reason, of which I am truly conscious, that I shall choose to say little about it. The best way to secure ourselves against a charge of folly, is certainly not to commit foolish actions, or write foolish things ; and yet I have reason to know from experience, that our best caution will not always avail, as there are people in the world ready to *do* and to *write*, and afterwards to *say* that *you* did it, or *you* wrote it.

I THOUGHT the above a good climax, and broke off, because it pleased me, though I do not expect it will please every body : those who are versed in adapting their own deeds to the name and discredit of another, will undoubtedly not like the observation ; neither can they deny, that a person honoured by this distinguishing mark of their notice, may, whenever a fair opportunity offers, not only disavow the fraud, but has a right to treat such *actions* and such *writings*, with as much deliberate contempt as they appear to merit.

WHEN

WHEN I veered from the castle, I meant to return again; and here I am, merely to tell you, gentle reader, without shewing my ignorance by talking of orders I do not understand, that it was an edifice of much beauty, commanding in its situation, well wooded and well watered—the park extensive—the pleasure grounds, gardens—and the gardens—*Eden.*

THE workmanship of this solid castle already has stood the raging storms and buffeting winds of two complete centuries. How much more durable is the work of man than man himself! The castle-walls are still in a state of high preservation; whilst the feeble inhabitants of the castle, unable to sustain the pelting of the *pitiless storm*, tottered on their foundation, had nearly fallen to the earth, and been crushed under the weight of their own hard sorrows. Once, like the walls of the castle, their happiness appeared impregnable to any *side-long* assault from the shafts of *adversity*; proudly exulting in its supposed strength, it spoke a firm decided language, as if it would have said, I am secure against time and against accident.

THE lord of this fair domain, and the father of this happy family, was descended from a long list of honourable, though not ennobled ancestors: the title of Baronet had belonged to the name of Montreville ever since the restoration of Charles the Second, and always refused the acceptance of high honours, though often tendered, either in compliment to the splendour of their fortunes, or in exchange for their influence in parliament; and I never heard any other reason assigned why they did not lay hold of all the honours

honours that courted them to be taken up, but an old saying of Sir Thomas Montreville's, great, great, great, and still greater grandfather, which no doubt was carefully handed down to his posterity, That there was more true dignity in being an old independent commoner, than a new convenient peer ;— it being a well known fact, that the king could make the one—time alone could establish the other. I do not give you this specimen as a proof of their wisdom ; yet it so happened, that none of this facetious old gentleman's descendants, thinking themselves wiser than their forefathers, ever controverted his maxim, but hold it up, even to the present day, with all imaginable respect, adherence, and perseverance.

LADY Gertrude had been more distinguished by her birth and beauty than for the grandeur of a fortune, to which, though sole heiress, she could scarcely have been indebted for what are now called the necessaries of genteel life : but her birth and her beauty were amongst the least of her recommendations to the affections of her husband. She was the dear enlivening companion of his domestic hours, the generous but economical mistress of his family, and the inestimable mother of his children. Their number consisted but of two, a son and a daughter : William was the glory of their house ; Adelaide, the pride of their hearts. Though Providence had given them no other successors, such a treasure of virtues was funded in the souls of these two, as might have endowed a score of other claimants, had there existed so many to have divided their paternal affections.

THIS

THIS was precisely the situation of the respectable owners of the castle, two years before the commencement of my history—But alas! and alas! from that fatal period, I am doomed, with grief of heart and heaviness of spirit, to reverse the picture to shew it with some of the principal figures dashed out of the canvas, and the remaining ones veiled in affliction—I have always thought it, when amusing myself in sketching out a landscape, more difficult to describe with effect the stupendous and terrific scenes of nature, than to copy her easy cheerful countenance, when she overlooks the serene beauties of an autumnal evening, dashing with various-coloured tints the waving trees, and dimpling the smooth waters with the reflection of her own smiles. If a meer novice can find so much difference in the subject for her pencil, now that I have taken up the pen, will not the same objection arise? But as I am not the founder of other people's fate any more than of my own, I must proceed, taking the terrific and the pleasant from the point of view in which they present themselves to me.

THE first material circumstance that disturbed the peace and ruffled the till then even-composed disposition of Lady Gertrude Montreville, was occasioned by one of those annual visits she had been accustomed to receive, but never much delighted in, from the Honourable Mrs. Johnson.—Who Mrs. Johnson was, I must make you understand before I go any farther.

Mrs. Johnson was grand-daughter of a Mrs. Osmond, who was also the maternal grandmother of
Sir

Sir Thomas Montreville, a very old lady, who had entered into the ninety-sixth year of her age when she became a resident at the castle ; an arrangement which would never have taken place, had not Mrs. Johnson, with whom she lived before, and who was a fine lady, complained even to Sir Thomas, that his grandmother was become abominably troublesome, and she did not know, for her part, what to do with her any longer : her family were coming out, and their improvements must be attended to more than she could at present find time to bestow on them ; Mrs. Osmond being so extremely fidgey and disagreeable. Besides, she was obliged to see all the world, and could never keep her out of the room when she had company.

THIS troublesome, fidgeting, disagreeable intruder, as represented by Mrs. Johnson, had, with the tenderest care, reared up her undutiful and ungrateful grand-daughter, from that unprotected season of infancy, which to a female orphan is always considered as the most dangerous ; and, after her marriage with Mr. Johnson, became a fixture in his family, where, for several years, she experienced a proper degree of attention and respect ; but living so much beyond the time limited for her existence, and having gained upon her to comply with all their requisitions. Mrs. Johnson could bear it no longer, and wished to shift off the burthen from her own shoulders upon any other body's who was willing to bear it. When she signified her discontent to Sir Thomas, she had no intention of securing an asylum for her grandmother in the castle ; she would rather have settled her in any other place, and in any other family

family in the habitable world ; and when she began the subject, had nothing else in view, but to sound him as to a plan she had very long concerted, of placing her near town, at a farm-house, with the owners of which she had actually contracted for her reception. She was not arrived to this part of her proposition, when, watching the turn of Sir Thomas's features, and seeing nothing in them to encourage a farther developement, she artfully gave such a turn of drollery to all that she had being saying before as made her cousin, who had not, amongst his good qualities, a remarkable portion of penetration, believe, that she really had been jesting ; and, though his judgment accused her of making an improper choice as to the subject of her mirth, his accusations were carried no farther. I think this overwhelming blindness, which seized on Sir Thomas, when the deception was so visible, as well as another instance of infatuation, which I am coming to by and by, ought to be accounted for ; but, by the rules of reason, there is no accounting for either ; all that I can say, I will say : Mrs. Johnson had been a hypocrite from her cradle—and poor Sir Thomas, who was himself without guile, had, from the cradle, been the dupe of her deceptions : she knew how to manage his humour, and performed her arts with so much address, as to preserve his good opinion, when she had lost that of her other connections—In short, he was partial ; and honest partiality is a respectable apology for all sorts of weaknesses which are intentionally harmless, though eventually they may be the cause of some mischief.

C H A P. V.

Penetration a rare talent, but not always useful to its owner—An invitation produces different sensations from different causes—The time when to be dutiful and affectionate to an old grandmother—A convenient Abigail—Fond adieus—A fine gentleman, and a proposal.

LADY Gertrude Montreville, with all the graces of feminine softness, possessed a degree of penetration not common to her sex ; a gift that was of no advantage to her in her family intercourse with Mrs. Johnson ; she was Sir Thomas's relation, therefore Lady Gertrude could only see and lament the arts by which she practised her impositions on his too credulous nature, without trying to move the veil from his sight that prevented him from beholding her character in its true colours.

WHEN Sir Thomas repeated to Lady Gertrude the conversation that had passed between him and Mrs. Johnson about their grandmother, she did not say to him—you have been deceived, there is more of earnest than of jest in this complaint ; but she thought so, and acting in consequence of this opinion, as well as in conformity to her own systematic rule of universal benevolence, without casting the smallest reflection on the conduct of Mrs. Johnson, she prevailed

on

on Sir Thomas to send Mrs. Osmond word, that whenever she found her residence in town fatiguing or unpleasant, he requested she would look on his house as her future home and asylum.

SINKING under the cold neglect and eternal ill humour of her grand-daughter, Mrs. Osmond, soon after the return of Mrs. Johnson from the castle, accepted Sir Thomas Montreville's invitation of uniting herself to his family, with as much joy as could be felt or expressed at an age so enfeebling as that to which she was arrived : but Mrs. Johnson did not see her depart without a mixture of vexation and jealousy, enough to counterbalance the pleasure she could not help testifying to her particular friends, when she told them, that she had got rid of the old figure.—Stronger much stronger might have been these counter-sensations of distrust, but for the care she had taken long ago, to secure, as much as a will could secure it, the whole property of Mrs. Osmond, which was never estimated at less than fifty thousand pounds ; not indeed for her own use, but for the use of a son, whom she loved almost better than herself ; and, until this will was made, Mrs. Johnson might have vied with the famous Grecian daughter for duty and affection to an aged parent !

POSSESSED of this will, she had so little time free from the avocations of pleasure to throw away in calculating chances, that all the provision she had made against its being superceded (hardly thinking it in the nature of things that such an event should happen) was, by placing a creature as subtle and as
cunning

cunning as herself, to attend her grandmother, and carefully to watch her motions.

Jacquiline had taken possession of her new-appointed post, before the mask of respect was torn from the conduct of the dissimulating Mrs. Johnson, and Jacquiline, being well instructed, soon got on the blind side of her superannuated mistress. It is not to be reckoned amongst the least of her arts, that she acquired a large share of her confidence, by making comments to the disadvantage of Mrs. Johnson, by the direction of Mrs. Johnson herself, who desired her influence might increase so far, that her charge might take no step on which she was not priviously consulted, to prevent accidental surprises; for she was always complaining that Sir Thomas and Lady Gertrude were two of the most artful designers in the whole world.

BEFORE her grandmother removed to the castle, her behaviour underwent another revolution; for when she found it impossible to make her give up the asylum she had so joyfully accepted, for the retirement which Mrs. Johnson strongly recommended, that lady, for several days preceding the departure of Mrs. Osmond and her attendant Jacquiline, was seen to weep, at least very often to wipe her eyes: she would also sometimes squeeze her grandmother's hands, press them to her lips, call her dearest, best-beloved parent; beg she would pardon any little inattentions which the cares of her family might have occasioned, and given to what was only heedlessness the appearance of neglect; with many more equally-sincere confessions, and equally tender entreaties,

-treaties, that she might be thought of with affection, as well as her poor dear children.

To such fine speeches the old lady had but one reply, which carried as much meaning with it as these five words could convey—I shall never forget you.—However, when these two relations came to part, it was done with so much civility on one side, and so much fond regret on the other, that Mrs. Johnson, having kissed this dear grandmother after she was seated in her carriage, and received a very laconic blessing in return; went back to the house, quite secure, in her own mind, that she had done away all former prejudices, and that every thing would go on as it had begun; placing, at the same time, some dependence on the abilities of Jaquiline, if she should ever be called upon to exert them in the way of information.

SIR Thomas's invitation to his grandmother was not the only mortification Mrs. Johnson received that year from her relations in the West—Miss Montreville had just completed her sixteenth year, and cousin Johnson, knowing what part of the estate was entailed on younger children, thought it would be no bad alliance for her hopeful son, a handsome young man, who had already established such a fame for gallantry and infidelity, that it was not easy to excel him in these accomplishments.

WHEN Mrs. Johnson made this proposal to the father and mother of Adelaide, they only replied, that, young as their daughter was, she had formed views for herself, which had received their sanction, and

and put it out of their power to accept the honour she offered them.

THAT is very odd, said she ; I hope it is not your poor neighbours, the Davenports, on whom you intend to bestow her ?

You will know one day or other, answered Sir Thomas, with a smile ; she is not to be married till she is nineteen, and it is not our custom to talk of things so long beforehand.—Mrs. Johnson knew every part of the ground she had to go over, and though she was not satisfied, yet was she silent, and never again renewed the subject.

DISAPPOINTMENTS of any sort sat lightly on the mind of Mrs. Johnson, not because she was less sanguine in her projects than another, but because she was continually forming so many, that it was impossible half of them should succeed ; and as she is observed to be a kind of second nature, so the very crosses she had met with, acted as a shield against the venomous bite of those that were to come.—On the whole, perhaps, she was as well pleased to have the affair off as on ; she had made the proposition without consulting her son, who, after all, might have been averse to fulfil the engagement: she was dragging him into ; and her two daughters, she well knew, could not abide their cousin ; nor, indeed, was her beauty or merit any recommendation to Mrs. Johnson herself : so that all these drawbacks to family harmony spelt together, she could not but acknowledge that every thing had happened for the best, and that her elegant son ought not to be contented with any lady under

under the rank of a duke's or earl's daughter at least, to grace the head of his table.

LADY Gertrude, though a party at the conference, when these propofals were made for her daughter, faid less than might been expected ; but whilst her tongue was silent, her heart spoke, and thanked Providence, in an extacy of gratitude, that there did not remain a chance of her Adelaide's ever becoming the wife of a Johnson.

I MENTIONED, some pages ago, that the first serious interruption to Lady Gertrude's felicity, proceeded from one of those annual visits she was accustomed to receive from the lady of whom I have been speaking with more truth than ceremony ; that visit, its motive, and its consequences, shall be the subject of another chapter.

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

Comforts of age realized—Beauty, a gem shewing to most advantage when set in sterling sensibility—Amusements proper for invalids—Old women never tired of new adjustments—The confidant in a puzzle—Her recovery out of it—Intelligence—A visit, and a battle.

MRS. Osmond had not been long snugly nestled in at the castle, before she began to make comparisons between her late and present situation; which were sometimes made with tears of resentment, but oftener produced the same weak effusions from emotions of a much pleasanter nature, when she every hour experienced, that instead of being looked upon as a burthen in the house of her grandson, the whole family proved by their conduct that they considered her company as an acquisition to their own happiness.

ADELAIDE, the ever gracious, ever fascinating Adelaide Montreville! from her unremitting attentions, and tender assiduities to the health, the comfort, and the amusement of this interesting venerable parent, awakened all of the sensibility that was yet alive in the heart of ninety-six; and, without consulting any part of the family, she formed a resolution, which she thus carried into execution.

FINDING

FINDING herself one day not well enough to leave her chamber, Adelaide had dedicated, as usual, her whole time to the cares of nursing, and the pleasures of entertaining her. The medicine she took was made less unpalatable when administered by the hands of her gentle and affectionate grandchild—If inclined to exert her spirits by an effort of cheerfulness, Adelaide's memory was ransacked for little bagatelles, to assist the salutary purpose—if disposed for the reception of harmonic sounds, she drew them from her harp or guittar, and joined them to the sweeter harmony of her own sweeter voice. When any of these grew tedious on the ear of age, Adelaide would have recourse to a book, and, having lulled her to a short repose, watched till she awoke again, with more anxiety than Mrs. Johnson would have shewn had the last scene been closing in her presence.

THE next morning Mrs. Osmond found herself much better; she waked at an early hour, and had dreamed all night of Adelaide.—She called for Jacqueline, who slept on a pallet by the side of her own bed: it was only five o'clock, and she had some trouble to make her voice heard by her drowsy attendant.

JACQUILINE was ordered to produce pens and paper, and to set down what she should dictate. Without guessing the motive for these unreasonable commands, she prepared to obey them; but started and paused, when she understood that she was appointed to disinherit the son of her patroness, to whom she was indebted for many favours, which have not been yet enumerated.

At first she thought she would remonstrate against her mistress's intentions, and actually laid the pen down to execute the grateful design ; but a second thought succeeded, so fraught with personal advantages, that the first was discarded, and the last adopted ; and, what her lady dictated with much recollection, she, with equal calmness and wonderful exactness (except in one single article) committed to paper. This article did not then appear to Mrs. Osmond ; nor will it in this place be fully explained to the reader.

Her work being finished, and a seal of secrecy put on her lips by the bounty of her lady, who, to purchase it, presented her with a purse of some value ; she folded up the directions for this new will, and caused it, with the same privacy as before, to be carefully conveyed to Mrs. Osmond's lawyer, in whose hands, being first duly executed, it was lodged for the greater security.

From the beginning to the end of this business, the completing of which took up about a fortnight, Jaquiline found no inclination to be unfaithful, by violating her vows of silence ; but after the will was finished and deposited, she thought there would be no great harm in cracking the seal of secrecy that had been impressed on her lips, merely to give Mrs. Johnson a peep into the mystery, and so set about it immediately. She did not say she had any hand in making the will ; she only said such a will was made, and lamented that she did not know it in time to prevent the evil.

Jacquiline.

Jacquiline, when she wrote on this distressing subject to the disappointed party, did not omit to set forth the *particulars* of the will ; only with the same small reserve as she made in reading over the instructions to Mrs. Osmond, as being the just transcript of her own directions : how she had come at those particulars, she accounted for by having looked amongst her lady's papers, after the whole transaction was over, where she met, to her utter astonishment, minutes of the treacherous business.

To the utter and more natural astonishment of Mrs. Johnson, when Jacqueline's letter was received by her, she found that her estimable son, by this new disposition of the grandmother, was entirely cut off from the advantages of her fortune, except Miss Montreville, to whom it was first bequeathed, should happen to die childless ; on which condition he was to depend for the reversion : a far more distant prospect than that of Mrs. Osmond's decease, though another dozen of years had still been added to those which Mrs. Johnson already accounted a tedious eternity.

THESE are fine doings, indeed ! cried she—my son disinherited—and not one of my children distinguished by a legacy—Fine doings, truly ! to be cheated out of the bread I have so hardly earned, by keeping the old fool so long in my family, and by a parcel of people who never had any trouble with her. Her rage knew no bounds, it was furious, it was frenzical ; so was the anger of her family ; her own could only surpass their's : they even cast some oblique reflections on her former want of patience,

ence, which had made her drop the mask of attention, when the event shewed how much more wise it would have been to have worn it to the last moment of their grandmother's existence ; who, if she could have been comfortable with them, would never have formed new friendships, or have been coaxed into making a new disposition of her effects.

HAD these bitter reflections proceeded from her daughters only, she would have crushed them under her feet ; but they were chiefly made by a son, whose displeasure she dreaded, and whose observations, right or wrong, were sure to be treated by her with more respect than they deserved. Unable to support his unrestrained invectives, she ordered her carriage, and, attended only by servants, flew down to the castle, fully determined, in the present plan of her hasty conclusion, to hurl destruction on the unsuspecting heads of all its peaceable inhabitants.

HER appearance, in a condition so foreign from composure, and in a family where she was not just then expected, must have had a strange effect on their nerves, had they been at home to receive her, but, fortunately for her, and for them, they were all, including Mrs. Osmond, gone out, to enjoy the air of a very fine morning ; and were to take some refreshment at the house of a neighbour, before they returned back to dinner.

TWENTY minutes had this delighted little party driven from the door, when Mrs. Johnson, like a witch on a broomstick, came flying up to it, muttering
ing

ing to herself, and casting her spells around with as much rapidity as the wheels turned on their axis.

SHE had travelled all night without stopping, except to change horses; and, if she had not been on an errand of mischief, would, doubtless, have found herself very much fatigued: but fatigue, in her situation, was out of the question; and, jumping from her carriage, she sprung into the house, as if she was just risen from her bed, and had afterwards, taken a dip in the ocean, to invigorate her constitution.

FINDING all the principals of the family were gone out, she felt something like pleasure at their absence, as she wished to pay her first compliments, and in private, to her grandmother's attendant, who she ordered should be sent to her immediately. In the mean while, throwing herself at full length on a sofa, she waited Jaquiline's coming, her eyes fixed on the door, with that sort of cunning impatient look, which may be observed in the round eyes of a cat, as she sets and watches for the poor little mouse she means to prey on.

JAQUILINE received the summons with becoming submission, and flew to meet her commands, anticipating the praises and presents to which she conceived herself entitled — What then must have been her disappointment, when Mrs. Johnson, darting from her supine attitude, seized on her as she entered! and what her astonishment, when, instead of being greeted with thanks, she was stunned with reproaches; and when she expected a purse would be put into her now hands,

hands, to find the hands of Mrs. Johnson, which were not the weakest in the world, entangled in her spruce powdered tresses, and the cap torn from her head, to which it had been firmly fastened, before she made her approaches! The conclusion of this battle I reserve for another chapter.

C H A P. VII.

A little moralizing—A little unaccountable—A reconciliation perfected—A consultation begun—A hypocritical meeting—A hypocritical take-in—A remark on different properties—A plain well meaning epitaph—A wish out of season—and a short declaration.

MODERATION, though a slow mover, will go a great way before its strength is exhausted ; whilst violence, that travels much faster, is much sooner spent.—I owe this observation to the ending of an engagement, which began on one part with so much vigour, and was resisted on the other with so little exertion, that, by some unaccountable means as they fell out so they fell in. Mrs. Johnson, entirely vanquished by the submission of her victim, begged her pardon for the outrage she had committed ; and the humble Abigail readily confessed that appearances were so much in her disfavour, that, if there was any fault on either side, it was certainly the too great lenity of Mrs. Johnson, when she supposed her capable of the monstrous sin of unfaithfulness to her interest.

PEACE thus being established more firmly than ever between the enraged lady and her cold apologizing coadjutor, from scratching they turned to caressing,

caressing, and from the strife of loud words to the honeyed cadence of whispering consultation—and the three hours they spent together, without interruption, seemed but as a moment to each of them.

WHEN the family came back from their airing, cousin Johnson ran into the hall to meet them—her face was embellished with smiles—she bestowed her embraces on them all—but when she came to Mrs. Osmond, the farce was so well acted, that it might have been supposed she intended to faint away in her arms.

THE poor old lady, who had been too often the dupe of her hypocrisy to be much flattered by any shape it could assume, and perhaps thinking of the alteration made in her will, of which she supposed the other to be ignorant; she threw a small check on the vivacity of Mrs. Johnson's raptures by the want of warmth with which she received them; she wriggled herself as fast as she could from the tender hold of her transported relation, and, taking Adelaide by the hand, shuffled on before, and was the first who entered the saloon, to which the rest of the company followed her. Mrs. Johnson, having fondly passed her arm through Sir Thomas Montreville's, talked and looked as if she had been actually made up of goodness, candour, and affection.

LADY Gertrude asked Mrs. Johnson why she had not brought down both, or at least one of the young ladies with her.

WHY,

WHY, the truth is, she replied, that I have been a little foolish—am brushed through the gallery of my whole family, who do nothing but laugh at my superstition—have given them all the slip, and am come away to you, merely for the benefit of my own heart's ease.

You superstitious, Martha! cried Sir Thomas, whistling, to shew his incredulity. What extraordinary evidence can be produced to make me believe you have yielded to a weakness always despised and ridiculed by you, ever since I can first remember?

No matter for that, my good Sir, the fact is as I tell you—She sighed, and cast her pathetic eyes tenderly towards Mrs. Osmond—then added, thank God! I find you all well, and I am now satisfied.

WHY, have you been dreaming any thing ailed us? asked Sir Thomas, laughing at her gravity; or have you seen my ghost come and draw back your curtains at midnight?

I NEVER trouble my head about you, said she; and if your ghost had appeared, it would not have frightened me half so much as a dream that has tormented me this fortnight.

AND whom might this dream or vision concern? Ah! poor Martha! it is all up with your best days when you turn dreamer.

I SHOULD not have been such a fool, I do believe, Sir Thomas, had the subject of my sleeping thoughts

thoughts related to any one else in the whole world but my dear grandmother; the preservation of whose health is of such consequence to us all,—that even, as you see, a mere shadow that threatens to invade it, can disturb my tranquility.

Mrs. Osmond, who till now had been sitting silent, nor seemed to attend to the conversation that passed between her two descendants, shewed them that she had in reality not been so inattentive as she appeared to be, by observing, that it was very odd people should be subject to painful feelings when asleep, for those who had no portion in their compassion when they were awake.

THIS was an occasion for which Mrs. Johnson had been fishing—for which she was prepared—and on which she seized with avidity, that she might impress the whole circle, as well as the old lady herself, with a new set of ideas.

I CANNOT, my dear madam, said she, but feel the severity of your remark, and know that it is intended for me: perhaps you think you have a proper foundation for your complaints; but before you condemn me as a monster, which I must be in my own eyes, if I was to lose sight of the duty, reverence, and affection that I owe you, not only as a parent, but as the tender protector of my orphaned infancy. Before I have lost all interest in your heart, permit me to exculpate my conduct from the charge of ingratitude:—saying this, she knelt down on one knee, and embraced the hands of her grandmother; who, if she did not betray any great solen-
tion

tion of those hard particles her faith was composed of, neither did she testify any additional displeasure at her humiliation: but at length feeling her tears fall, and then looking on her hands where they had fallen, to see if these tears were real, without forgetting her former hardheartedness, she pitied her present mortification, not knowing it was chosen to serve any particular purpose, and returned her hard grasp with an involuntary pressure; which, to the comprehension of the well-versed actress, conveyed more than it meant; and what was only an emotion of pity, perhaps of christian forgiveness, she construed into the fullest reconciliation. She therefore did not let go the hand that had pressed hers, but held it fast, whilst Miss Montreville readily resigned her place by the side of Mrs. Osmond, that it might be filled by the fair penitent, wiping a tear of sympathy from her dove-like eyes, in commemoration of a scene, to her extremely interesting and pathetic.

Mrs. Johnson still insisted on entering into a defence of her past conduct towards Mrs. Osmond, though frequently desired not to give herself the trouble, by the person to whom her appeal was directed; but not being able to go over so much ground as she did in this round-about vindication, the reader must be satisfied with being told, that the whole blame was taken from herself, and made to rest with so much address on a dictatorial husband, who never contradicted her in his life—on her peevish children, who really had felt something like tenderness for their grandmother, when cruelly used by their mother—and on the artful wicked Jaquiline, whom she loaded with the opprobrious epithets of
late

tale-bearer and incendiary, and who had never acted in such matters but by her own directions :—yet did she make these habits of abuse fit the different wearers so nicely, that Sir Thomas was convinced—the grandmother, kissed her cheek—and Lady Gertrude herself, if not a profelyte to the new doctrine, yet certainly had a better opinion of her now than before the conversation took place : she had sown lies like mustard-seed, and a plentiful harvest attended her labours.

Mrs. Johnson was without dispute as wise as the serpent ; but any analogy between Mrs. Johnson and a dove is past finding out—the harmless qualities of the latter more properly belonged to Sir Thomas Montreville—subtleness and mildness were distinct portions which Providence seemed to have allotted to each of these cousins, and had forbid either to encroach on the other's inheritance.

I wish I knew why it is that we so seldom happen to find the great and good united together—how sublime would be the union!—Every day we hear of good people who are not brilliant, and those who are brilliant, I know, can apply their talents to such purposes as do them no credit. However, I am not just now speaking of Sir Thomas Montreville, who, with the best heart in the world, had also his share of plain understanding, and infinite sincerity ; but Sir Thomas had his foibles, and who is there without them?

REST then in peace the ashes of Sir Thomas Montreville! which, whilst I am writing these
Memoirs,

Memoirs, are mouldering in the tomb of his ancestors, with this inscription over them :

E P I T A P H.

Underneath this spot lie interred
the mortal remains of an honest man !

The name of Sir THOMAS MONTREVILLE shall
not decay with the marble on which it is
engraved, nor his good actions perish
with the world from which he
was hastily summoned ;

because

such names and such actions
are registered in the book of heaven.

HIGHLY as I reverence the memory of all good people, in whose exits from this world we may learn to make our own ; and notwithstanding the particular respect I bear the whole Montreville family, whose happiness was deeply shaken by the death of Sir Thomas ; yet I cannot help, as I draw near to the scene that I am next to represent, wishing with all my heart the good man's fate had been a little hastened !—The wish is not a cruel one—it would have prevented a train of evils, which originated in the most weak and least considerate action of his whole life.

THOUGH by anticipation you have read his epitaph, you will still find him alive in the following chapter.

C H A P. VIII.

Reasons for prolonging a visit to the country—Serpentine measurements of attention for all degrees of kindred—A cozening conference—Deplorable effects of disappointed love, represented through the medium of maternal apprehension—The net spread, and the fish caught.

MRS. JOHNSON'S accidental visit to the castle was lengthened something beyond the fortnight, which she had named as the extent of her stay in the country : it was a case of necessity ; for, business undertaken on a large scale, who shall say when it will be finished ?

Not a word of the will escaped from the cautious lips of this female Machiavelian.—Unequaled was the filial affection with which she watched over her dear grandmother—unequaled the fondness she lavished on Adelaide Montreville.—Much of profession had she for Lady Gertrude ; but a great deal more of interesting ardour for her cousin Sir Thomas. In short, not to spin out a subject which I want to get of my hands, though in my heart it will abide for ever, I must hasten to explain, how, at last, the whole of her scheme was accomplished.

APPARENTLY

APPARENTLY casual, but wilfully designed, she had spoken the day after her coming down, of a tour she proposed making to the continent, for the advantage of her two daughters; where they might pass eight or ten months very pleasantly, in going from place to place, seeing sights, making purchases, and picking up improvements.

SIR Thomas thought it an excellent plan; and Lady Gertrude was too polite, and too indifferent about their motions, to form any opinion of her own: so smilingly adopted that of her husband: and nobody thinking themselves particularly interested in the conversation, it soon took another direction.

NEXT morning this adept in duplicity renewed the subject, by asking Sir Thomas and Lady Gertrude if, on consideration, they could still flatter her intended excursion with their full approbation? They answered in the affirmative. After she had carelessly observed, she wished they would be of the party—A wish so ridiculous produced only a whistle from Sir Thomas, a shrug from Lady Gertrude, and a laugh from the artful proposer, who knew she might as well move the castle itself, as the inhabitants of it, out of their own country.

MRS. JOHNSON had been at the castle ten days, when Lady Gertrude left her alone with Sir Thomas, whilst she retired to her closet to answer some letters from a very dear friend, who had lately gone from their hospitable mansion, to reside a few months in Ireland.

COUSIN

COUSIN Johnson, in this *tête-à-tête* conference, found it not difficult to sift out of Sir Thomas the name of that youth, to whom he had promised the hand of Adelaide, when she should have attained the age of nineteen.

THIS is very hard, said she, for my poor son, who I find, since I was here on my last visit, has adorned his lovely cousin from their first childish knowledge of each other. Yes, added she, with a sigh drawn from the bottom of her treacherous bosom, and a tear that seemed to fall from her obedient eyes—yes, it is very, very hard, and I shudder at what may be the sad effects of this fatal disappointment.

SIR Thomas looked not only surprised, but astonished, protesting he never could have suspected such a misfortune ; and wished he had been apprized of her son's attachment to his daughter, before it was too late for him to shew how much he was really interested in his happiness.

It is never too late, cried she, to try at least to save an amiable young man from absolute destruction. A fresh storm of sighs, and new showers of tears, carried these lamentable words swiftly and surely to the heart of her guileless relation, who again regretted that the affections of Adelaide, and his own honour, were too deeply engaged to afford the unfortunate Mr. Edward Johnson the most distant resource in expectation.

My dear, kind Sir Thomas, you have said enough—you pity us—you would help us if you could.

CERTAINLY

CERTAINLY—and with pleasure—but I have given my word to another—and my word is sacred.

Was it not conditionally that you gave it? Was there no reserve, in case your daughter should change her mind before she arrived at the age to which you have so wisely annexed her future establishment.

THAT reserve was no doubt inclusive, though not specified, when her mother and I approved of and consented to the alliance; nor do I believe, from the many good qualities of the young man, that any such change as you hint at is ever likely to happen.

I AM forced to assent to this opinion, said she; I know how deserving the object of her attachment is, I have nothing, therefore, to hope from her unsteadiness. She has none of the fickleness that belongs to other women. She is the most charming creature in the world; and her lover is almost as charming as herself.

I LIKE this impartiality, cried Sir Thomas; it shews you candid and generous. I love him almost as well as I do my own son.

MY dear Sir Thomas, that son of your's is a paragon—What a figure will he make when he applies himself to business! William Montreville is positively fit already to sit at the helm of state.—Sir Thomas was vain of his children; and, whilst he swallowed the flattery, loved the hand that fed him so voluptuously.—But, to return to our former

subject, continued she, seeing him in the best of all possible humours, though there can be no hopes for my poor son, with the darling of his affections; and though I would not, even to save his life, wish to dissolve or disturb the union of a pair so amiable, so mutually deserving; yet, ah! my best cousin, pity my situation; pity the feelings of a mother, and judge from your own what they must be, to see that boy Edmund, on whom my soul hangs, as your's may do on William, languishing out a short and wretched existence, because that blessing is torn from him, which, by a little address, he might be brought to relinquish, without any of these horrible consequences.

I wish it could be done with all my heart, cried Sir Thomas overcome by her acting.

AND it can be done, if you will but consent to the little innocent stratagem I think I can propose, that will only be attended with pleasure and improvement to Miss Montreville, and probably prevent the two evils I most dread, either that I shall lose my son, or that he will lose his senses.

Poh! poh! Martha, all these ideas are all idle as your dream, and fraught with superstition; but I respect your weakness, since you will indulge it; and any thing that an honest man can do, I will do to make you easy.

THEN I ask you to permit your daughter to be one of the party, when I go to the continent.

AND

AND your son, I suppose, is to make another?—that I will not consent to; it will be the trick of a Judas.

How you mistake my meaning! I would not have Edmund ever again see Miss Montreville, whilst these ties remain, which exclude him from even a possibility of succeeding; no, not for the universe would I have this thing happen. You could not be more against bringing them together, as matters are circumstanced, than I should be; neither am I selfish enough to wish them loosened, if my son's rival should continue to merit your approbation, and the preference of your daughter. Edmund is not to go with us—nor to join us whilst we are there. I know his disposition; and I know how to manage it. Here are but little more than two years to come, before her engagement will be ratified; and if she passes the whole of that time in receiving the attentions of her future husband—the constant reports of the happiness this lover is permitted to enjoy, cannot but act as daggers to the soul of another, who loves her as well, and thinks he loves her better. In the frenzy of despair, for I know him capable of the most desperate paroxysms, of what may he not be guilty, perhaps to his own destruction—perhaps to theirs! Is there any answering for the actions of a man disappointed in his first attachment, and driven to madness by his passions?

HERE Mrs. Johnson paused, complained of sudden faintness from her extreme exertion of spirits, and begged his excuse for a moment, whilst she fetched a bottle of salts from the next room. He made no objections,

objections, and passed the few moments she was absent, in walking up and down, weighing what she had said, and wondering what she would say next ; inclined, on the whole, rather to comply with her request, than to baulk her expectations.

Mrs. Johnson was possessed of a failing, which was all her life so cautiously concealed, that nobody, except a confidential servant or two, had ever caught her in the practice of it, or suspected any such private indulgencies. She had found her bottle, which, instead of salts, was filled with cordial ; and soon came back to the charge, with even more than her own natural vigour.

You may see, said she, how eager I am to carry my point, by the haste I have made to get rid of the faintness, suspense and agitation brought upon me. Shall I finish my string of reasons ? for I will not expect your final determination till I have laid them fairly before you. Sir Thomas nodded assent, and she proceeded.

I WILL not ask to take Miss Montreville back with me to town, or that she might follow me ; for there, I fear, it would be impossible to prevent interviews, which might only distract the poor young man more than he is distracted already. The arrangements for our expedition will take up but a few days ; I shall then let you know what time my daughters and I shall be at Dover ; where we shall wait to receive our lovely cousin ; and if you consign her, with your own hand, to my care, it will be so much the more agreeable. English female servants, in a
foreign

foreign country, are always a torment ; so I shall only take Davis with me, who will do for us all on the voyage ; and I shall engage proper attendants for my three young folks when we get to Paris.

BUT where, if I should consent to what you have proposed, are the advantages that should arise out of this plan for the benefit of my cousin Edmund ?

I THOUGHT you must have seen them, or I should have explained that before :—Do you not know, my dear Sir Thomas, how madly young men will feed hopes on air and vapour, when they can get nothing better to keep it alive ?—the very idea that Miss Montreville has condescended to make a part of my family, though he is not the better for her society, will be a sort of romantic festival to his famished passions, which are not more hopeless than they have ever been ardent and delicate.

HE is a very handsome fashionable man, said Sir Thomas ; and when he lays aside his present unlucky predilection, may choose a wife from what family he pleases.

THAT is my very plan, she replied ; but I would wean him from this more than unlucky—this fatal attachment, and not tear it from his heart with red-hot pincers. If she goes abroad with me, absence may make him forget her ; if she stays at home with his rival, the tortures of jealousy will be a needless addition to the agony of despair——You are tender-hearted ; you cannot refuse to assist in so merciful a disposition.

BUT

BUT do you purpose making the *tour* without a gentleman?

I THOUGHT I had told you that Mr. Johnson, who, you know, is a mighty good sort of man, goes to take care of us.

WELL, cousin, I will consider your proposal; and when I have consulted my wife, written to my son at Oxford, and taken the opinion of my daughter herself, you shall know our determination.

NOTWITHSTANDING your own inclinations to save me from eternal regret, said she, I now know my doom is fixed, and I see, at this moment, my unhappy son expiring by his own hand.—O! these references—these references! What do they teach me to expect? Dear Lady Gertrude so timid—William so fond of his sister's company—Adelaide afraid to venture from the side of her mother.—Do you not see, Sir Thomas, if you are not my firm friend—If I am not to depend solely on you—what will become of my ill-fated Edmund, and his still more ill-fated mother?

THE conversation lasted much longer, and Mrs. Johnson's arts held out to the very end of it; when, with grief and horror I relate the baneful truth, Adelaide was promised to be the companion of her voyage, on his own word; which word had he not declared, in an early part of the conference, to be sacred?

C H A P. IX.

A solitary walk—Another tête-à-tête in consequence of the former—Conjugal affection—Maternal distress—Extraordinary fortitude—A submissive daughter, and a discontented grandmother.

LADY Gertrude, having finished her dispatches, returned to the room where she had left Sir Thomas and Mrs Johnson, but found neither of them there: one had strolled out into the woods; the other, who was by far the best satisfied of the two with the consequences of their tête-à-tête, was gone to make her toilet, assisted by Jaquiline, who humbly offered her aid, being disengaged just then from her attendance on her own mistress.

MEAN time, Sir Thomas Montreville, in his cogitating ramble through the finest pleasure-grounds in the world, saw nothing of these beauties which till now had never passed by his sight unmarked—unadmired—unadulated—With his eyes on the ground, and his arms folded, he walked slowly along, his thoughts fixed, not on the inanimate works of creation, but on his wife, his daughter, and Mrs. Johnson.—He condemned the too great haste with which he had consented to her proposition: but his word was given: to retract it was never in his mode of proceeding.

SOBER moments of reflection attended his progression, but offered themselves out of season, having escaped but second-best, in his combat with fraud, artifice, and cunning ; yet though they came without being useful, they brought him the conviction, that Mrs. Johnson must have some sinister design in making the request, and enforcing with so much energy, besides those reasons she had made ostensible to him for her extreme desire to be favoured with the company of Miss Montreville, on her excursion to the continent ; and surely there is not a reader of so little penetration, who will be behind hand with him in supposing, that her real, but concealed motive was, to insinuate herself and family into the confidence and esteem of Adelaide, and to secure an interest for the son of her idolitry in the heart of his cousin, if a vacancy should, by the death of a rival, or otherwise, be opened to her favour ; where from many circumstances, she had reason to suppose, neither his pretensions nor their own were sufficiently established.

SUCH was the idea which had now fully taken possession of Sir Thomas's collected imagination, and he did not refuse to adopt it with a sort of distant satisfaction—the parties both so young—knew so little of any body but themselves—their union at such a distance—it was very probable something or other might happen, in a natural way, to prevent its being ever compleated : the thoughts of Mrs Johnson applying unnatural ways to dissolve it never entered his head ; the influence she had always preserved over his good opinion her present visit had served to increase rather than lessen ; he could not condemn her
for

for wishing to save a son who, in his judgment, which had never been enlightened by facts, appeared to be, and was in reality, fully as honourable, fully as amiable, as the mother who bore him ; and Sir Thomas regarded Edmund Johnson as a proper successor to the present object of Adelaide's affections, and his own approbation, if life or love should fail in the long road of expectation through which the lovers were to travel ; and it must be allowed, that the date of life and love are both not a little precarious.

THE more he contemplated these shadowy advantages, which were cast upon his senses by the reflection of Mrs. Johnson's magic lantern, the better he became reconciled to the sacrifice he had made, and the more firm to his purpose.

ONLY one painful emotion now remained to be dispersed, and he vented it in these words—But what will her mother say !

AT this instant Lady Gertrude appeared in sight ; she had seen him walking in the shrubbery, and was come out to join him : it was the first time in his life that her presence did not augment his felicity : he would now have avoided her if he could, but his face was towards her, and he could not turn back, being conscious that she must know he had seen her on the way to meet him ; he therefore went slowly on, and had only a few minutes to form the following hasty, undigested plan of fitting the matter to her ear.

Mrs. Johnson, said he to himself, shall not be spoken of in the business ; I will take the proposal of it on myself—it will certainly be for the advantage of Adelaide's improvement that she should go, and to that score only I will place my desire that she might go. He adored his wife, and well knew, whatever obstacles might start to oppose his now favourite project, her affection for him would in the end conquer them all.

With a smile on his face, but a heart agitated by the idea, that he was going to give pain and grief, where he had hitherto conveyed only pleasure and joy, he met the ever beloved object of his invariable affections, who, having walked with a quick pace to come up with him, was a little fatigued, which he made a pretence, that they should sit a while under the shade of some trees till she had recovered herself ; and there he opened to her the whole of his own views, carefully concealing those of Mrs. Johnson ; not that he suspected she had any dislike to that lady, but from the firm conviction, that the proposal would be better received from him, as his own, than if it had been pointed out to them by any third person.

LADY Gertrude, when first he mentioned the subject, supposed him only in jest, and laughed at the idea ; but when he assured her, he was never more serious, a cloud of crimson enveloped her whole countenance, and her eyes filled with tears.—He tenderly caught hold of her hand, and cried out, Dearest Gertrude, why this emotion!—what objection, that does not arise from weakness, can you have

have to part with your daughter for so short a time, and ultimately so much to her advantage?

SIR Thomas, she replied, I have objections, insuperable objections, to sending away my daughter; I cannot, I will not yet suppose you are in earnest, when you propose it—but for God's sake do not sport with my feelings! rather say you are making trial of my extreme folly, and let us smile together at the success of your artifice!

He remained silent a moment, and afterwards, with a thousand expressions of tenderness, begged her pardon for taken up any resolution which she considered of so much consequence, without having first consulted her approbation; but, added he, if you will hear me out, and hear me with patience, I hope to convince both your heart and understanding, that the plan I am proceeding upon is not only the best we can adopt, but so exactly accordant to your own ideas of propriety, that all your amiable reluctance to a short separation, will vanish before your better reason.

I SHALL not tell you the arguments he used to accomplish this reform in the sentiments of Lady Gertrude, nor did he even at last effect it: but finding his determination rooted in the prejudice of opinion, he thought himself a victor, because she ceased to oppose him. Not through conviction was this silent submission to his decree, but because, as she could not conquer, she did not wish to distress him.

WELL,

WELL, then, Adelaide was to go—the beautiful Adelaide, who, for sixteen summers, had blown in the shade of retirement, this half-opened rose, ripening under the fairest and most flattering auspices, was doomed to be torn from the maternal tree, and consigned to the hand of a mischievous invader !

AMONGST all the reasons advanced by Sir Thomas to make a convert of Lady Gertrude, there was but one, which to her seemed worthy of the understanding that advanced them : I shall therefore mark it down in my book.

You know, said he, my best Gertrude, that even your partiality for the destined husband of our daughter, is not more sincere or more cordial than my own ; in this match we have consulted her interest less than her happiness, and whilst we are regardless of the one, it becomes a duty the more incumbent upon us, that we should endeavour to ensure the other. If there are no little trials made of their constancy at present, how shall we build on future prospects of felicity ? We are yet to look beyond two years for the completion of this union, and in two years they will have nothing to do, but, like substance and shadow, to follow each other ; and you know a few months must bring our elected son back to the village, if not to the castle, at which time they will be together so constantly, that if apathy does not steal on their hearts, much may evaporate of those nice and delicate attentions, a continuance of which will be as necessary to your daughter's

daughter's happiness, as they have ever been to your own.

LADY Gertrude, overpowered by the recollection of her obligations, on the score of unremitting tenderness, to this most indulgent of husbands, tried to gulp down the sorrows of her heart, as they rose to her throat, with a force that threatened suffocation; and from that moment her chagrin never discomposed their long-established harmony.

As they walked towards the house, Sir Thomas requested she would have the goodness to propose the plan to Miss Montreville, and to tell her, that this necessary absence from her friends should be softened, by their permission that she might write to, and receive letters from, the young man to whom she was contracted. She promised him to execute the commission; and when she went to Adelaide's apartment, he seized on the moment of her leaving him to find out Mrs. Johnson, and to tell her how he had settled the matter; that when he made the offer of Adelaide's attending her, it might not appear a concerted affair, settled between themselves, before either the mother or the daughter had been asked for their concurrence.

| To describe the extent of Mrs. Johnson's inwardly exulting, but outwardly moderate joy, that every thing was settled so much to her satisfaction and advantage, is not worth my labour. Ah, dear Lady Gertrude! how much more heart-rending, yet how much sweeter the task, to follow you into the presence of your beloved Adelaide; there to study, from

from your example, the difficult, but meek lesson of laying down your own will, and patiently submitting to be guided by that of another.

THIS was not all; to meekness and to patience was added the greatest quality of the human mind, invincible fortitude; a barrier so strong, that not one of her own emotions was suffered to escape through it, which might have discovered to Adelaide that she was less anxious than Sir Thomas for her seizing on the opportunity that now offered, of enlarging her ideas, by the knowledge of other countries, and receiving that polish to finish off her education, which the world always expected to find in young people who had any pretensions to birth or fortune: In short, my dear love added this exemplary mother, your father and I have just been settling this little agreeable excursion for you, which promises so much pleasure—so much improvement, and——

HERE she was interrupted by Adelaide, who falling on her knees, and weeping bitterly, sobbed out—Do not let me go—pray, do not let me go—dear, dear mama! I dislike Mrs Johnson—I dislike all her family.—Save me at least from going with them.—Save me, I entreat you!

THINK, oh think what now became of Lady Gertrude's resolution, of her fortitude!—Why, writhing under the agony of torturing fondness, she still, in appearance, supported the firmness of both; and by the powers she possessed over the soul of her complacent endearing daughter, that, when the family

family assembled a few hours after, she had bent her gentle disposition to such perfect conformity, that if she did not join in the conversation about this intended expedition, yet she listened to what was said by others, without betraying impatience or disgust.

THERE was but one person who took no pains to smother her discontent ; and it was with the greatest difficulty that the poor old grandmother was prevailed upon to sit down at the same table with people who could use her so cruelly as to send the dear child away, whose absence she felt it would be in vain for her to expect, or wish to survive — She was pleased with nothing that was done to please her — looked affronted with every body — answered nobody but in uncivil short monosyllables — what she did say was mumbled out to herself in such phrases as these — Ah, poor me ! — dear child ! — hard-hearted creatures ! and the like. She would look on the interesting Adelaide till her dim half-sightless eyes were filled with scalding tears, and then she would add : How barbarous you all are — if I am ill, who will take care of me now ? I shall take care of you, dear madam, said Lady Gertrude. Thank you, returned she ; but if I am very bad, and likely to die, Sir Thomas must promise to send for Adelaide back again. I give you my word, to do what you desire, said he. Then I know you will not break it, replied she ; and from that moment was restored to something like good humour.

C H A P. X.

Food for consolation always to be found, if we enquire after it—A separation that grieves nobody—A separation that grieves every body—A melancholy journey—A French leave—and an old woman prophesying in an easy chair.

IN the adjustment of a plan that had cost so much pain to some, and given so much pleasure to others, who were concerned in its consequences, there were two circumstances that in a great measure, served to dissipate Lady Gertrude's chagrin for every thing else but the absence of her daughter.—First, that Adelaide was not to go to town with Mrs. Johnson ; and the second, that Edmund Johnson was not to go abroad with his family.

Miss Montreville's brother was written to by his father, of the late arrangements, and Mrs. Johnson had the politeness to remain at the castle till his answer arrived. What that answer was it is immaterial to announce, as whether it was for or against his sister's going it made no difference in the general plan of their proceedings.

LADY Gertrude at first very strenuously objected to her daughters going without a female servant ; but

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was over-ruled and forced to give up the contest, even by conviction of her own good sense ; being persuaded that the arguments used by Sir Thomas against such a gratification were founded in reason. We certainly desire, said he, that this tour should bring improvement to Adelaide ; she already speaks a little French, a little Italian, and that little is good ; but dear Gertrude, recollect the diffidence with which she speaks any language but her own ; she has, I perceive, even an aversion to any other, and if we give her an English servant, it is very natural to foresee, that she, who does not think herself superior to the meanest of her fellow-creatures, will devote too much of her conversation to this attendant ; from the double motive of hearing and speaking that language to which she is so partial, and of diverting her Abigail, because she will suppose it her duty to divert a poor creature who can look up to nobody but herself, either for amusement or information.

Mrs. Johnson returned back to town better pleased with her own management than with the family she had quitted : good and bad people, like oil and vinegar, can never be made to mix pleasantly together ; the good may be deceived, but the bad are always sure to hate the virtues in another, which they do not themselves possess

LADY Gertrude kindly undertook to acquaint the lover of Adelaide concerning the plan which was now passed, agitating, and in great forwardness of preparation, for his mistress's removal to another country ; and whilst she informed him of an event which, she knew, would make her letter the most unwelcome one

one he had ever received, she did not forget to tell him, as a proof of their invariable purpose to unite them when the appointed time arrived ; that Sir Thomas had, with his usual considerate tenderness, withdrawn the restriction he had put them under, of not corresponding together, till time had convinced them that their affections were established on such a foundation that they were not to be shaken by absence ; the certain cure of a false passion, the confirmation of a true one. This was another of Sir Thomas's oddities, which, if my reader pleases, he may discover were none of them set up in defiance to the laws of common sense.

I SHALL say nothing of the parting scene—it was melancholy enough : Sir Thomas himself conducted Adelaide to Dover, and surely that road was never before marked with so many tears as she let fall in her progress over it, though often and carefully concealed from the observation of her travelling companion ; who, at the close of the second day, placed her under the protection of Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, who, with their two daughters, waited to receive them at the York Hotel. They did not fail till the following morning ; Sir Thomas, to spare himself and Miss Montreville, after he had embraced and wished her a good night, seen her to the door of her room, and pretended to go to his own, went down stairs, ordered horses to his carriage, and in half an hour set out again for the castle, more oppressed and distressed than he would even acknowledge to himself much less to Lady Gertrude, whose features, when she flew to meet the father of her Adelaide, were in a state of warfare ; smiles contending with tears, and
tears

tears putting to death these smiles in their very infancy.

BEING satisfied much to her heart's content, respecting the health, spirits and condition in which he had left this dear daughter of these hopes and anxious solicitude, she gave Sir Thomas so lively a representation of the labour she had gone through to pacify his grandmother, for the loss of her better-beloved attendant, that, though neither of them was just then much inclined to mirth, and loved her the more for that partiality which caused her ill-humour, yet could they not help laughing at the many ingenious ways she had found out, of making her anger known, not only to Lady Gertrude, but to every part of the family: she said that Mrs. Osmond had not stirred from her chamber since they went away, and that she had given up the whole of her own time in attending her there, but to no purpose in the world, as she did nothing but chide because Adelaide was taken from her. Poor Lady Gertrude was too much a sufferer in the cause, to use any means of calling her from these splenetic, angry-fits, but what were soothing, lenitive, and condescending: at last she would say to her, Well, well, I do not believe you are so much to blame as the Johnsons, but somebody else is, who ought to have been wiser.

LADY Gertrude made no repetition of conversations like this to Sir Thomas, nor did she confess to him how often, how sweetly, and yet how bitterly they had wept together over the memory of their absent treasure,

Sir

SIR Thomas asked what sort of temper she was in at present, and if he might venture to shew himself to her before she went to rest? Lady Gertrude was wishing him to decline the interview that night, for fear she might be disturbed and put off from her sleep, when Jaquiline appeared, at the door, to say that her lady had heard that Sir Thomas was returned, and desired to see him.

I AM a transgressor, said he; Gertrude, you must go with me, to secure my personal safety—He smiled, drew her hand under his arm, and they walked on together.

LADY Gertrude guessed at the reception prepared for him, by observing, that when she left Mrs. Osmond, half an hour before, she was sitting in her easy chair, with her face fronting the door; she had now reversed her position, so that, as she entered, they saw only her back, and it seemed as if she had instructed her very shoulders to speak the language of displeasure; for though always high, they were now pushed up, and much higher than usual.

SIR Thomas, finding that he must either laugh or laugh at the extraordinary scene before him, stifled the first, and indulged the last so heartily, that if his grandmother had been three rooms off, she would have heard that he was coming; but in the same room with him, she could not plead ignorance of his being entered, yet she neither stirred nor turned her head, but chaffily cried out as he was stepping towards her—So, grandson! you are come back I find, and have made a fine hand of it—I did not think

think you could have left the dear creature behind, though you said you would—Well, well, you have killed your poor old grand-mother, and there's an end of the matter; but I wish it may not be the occasion of more deaths than one:—and she looked at Lady Gertude very kindly, and as if she would have added, the heart of your wife will be broken as well as my own!

SIR Thomas kissed her hands very affectionately, for he was much struck with her sensibility, though she had a strange way of shewing it: he thanked her for the fondness with which she loved their Adelaide, and hoped it would not be lessened when she come home again, to take her station, as usual, under the wing of so partial and tender a parent.

THOMAS! Thomas! she replied pathetically, shaking her few remaining grey hairs, some of which having escaped from their binder, had fallen sparingly over her forehead, as if to render her prophecy more respectable, by adding to the venerable appearance of the venerable prophetess—Thomas! Thomas! said she, I am not to be flattered into false hopes; I shall never live to see the return of my child, neither may you, we are all in the hands of God; but I will try to forgive you for having robbed me, for a few weeks, perhaps months, of happiness in this world; her image I will carry with me to the next! But we will talk no more of her now, or I shall get no sleep to night; only remember, she continued, that you have promised to send for her if I should be very bad, and yet not so near my end but there might be

be a chance of my seeing her once more ; remember, Thomas, I have your own word for this last indulgence.

You have, madam, and I will strictly abide by it.

WELL, said she, then you may go, I can talk no more about it now.—She held out a hand to each—Sir Thomas pressed her forehead with his lips, Lady Gertude saluted her cheek ; she returned their endearments with the feeble pressure of enervated age, smiled kindly upon them, called them good creatures, herself a spoild child, gave them her blessing wished them a good night,—and they separated from her, more penetrated by the good qualities of her heart, than mindful of the oddities that marked her disposition.

I SHALL close this chapter with a request to my patient readers, that they will sometimes look at the title-page to put them in mind of the packet.

C H A P. XI.

A curtain, that shuts out the world, gently drawn before the eyes of nature quite exhausted by age—A question—A disappointment—A discovery—Heir and no heir, and I do not know what to call it.

THE good old lady was but a too true prophetess—the vigour of those artificial spirits that in a degree supported her strength, began to fail when Miss Montreville left the castle; to whom her attachment was of that extraordinary sort, that she was indebted to her attentions for a larger share of cheerful content than she had known at any former period of her very long life—her bank of content was broken—she could no longer draw on Adelaide for supplies—She first took to the confinement of her chamber, next to her bed, and from thence, at ninety-six, how easy is the last transition!

WHEN death stole upon this venerable ruin of mortality, he came in so gentle a form, that his approach was imperceptible; he came with no terrors in his looks, or torment in his train, but softly laid his hands upon her eyes and they were closed for ever.

THIS very natural event had not been less expected for many months by her dutiful grandchild, than at the

the time it happened. Two letters had already arrived from Adelaide, to gladden her friends at the castle, one from Calais, and the other from Paris ; and nobody enjoyed their contents more than Mrs. Osmond : the latter of these was received the day preceding her dissolution, and she then said she believed she might yet live long enough to see her again, even if her expedition should be prolonged beyond the date to which it was prescribed.

LADY Gertrude had accustomed herself, since Miss Montreville's departure, to go to the bed-side of her ancient guest, and enquired how she had rested, before she sat down at the toilet to make herself ready for breakfast : she was returning from the performance of this self-imposed duty, and found not the least alteration in the subject of her cares, but had only turned, and was not got to the door, when a deep sigh, that seemed to issue from the couch of repose, hurried her back to see what was the matter, and she found that the scene of Mrs. Osmond's existence was closed for ever.

GREAT as was Lady Gertrude's shock on this occasion, it might have been greater—she supposing her at first to be only in a fainting fit ; and by the time every thing had been tried to bring her out of it, she was better prepared for the reception of the melancholy truth.

SIR Thomas and his amiable wife borne this visitation with great propriety : they had done their duty by her when living, nor did she go to her grave unlamented :—there had been no mixture of sordid expectations in

in the kindness with which they treated her, neither was parade or ostentation mingled with the decent sorrow they expressed, when she ceased to demand their attention.

It had never formed an idea in the brain of Adelaide's parents, that either themselves or their children would ever be the better for what was possessed by their grandmother—she was a very honest woman, and had said to Sir Thomas, when she first came to live at the castle—Whatever you do for me, must be done gratis; my will is made, and Edmund Johnson is my heir.—How this plain declaration was received by the house of Montreville, might be clearly understood by the affectionate respect with which the family afterwards marked their conduct towards her.

THE consequence of knowing such a will existed, and believing that it had not been superseded by any other, occasioned Sir Thomas to dispatch a courier with information of Mrs. Osmond's death, inviting the heir to come down, and desiring he would give his own directions for the funeral, if, on inspecting the will, he did not find some orders of the deceased that were to be complied with.

EDMUND Johnson, who knew the will in his favour was not worth one of his steel buttons, considered a long time whether he should or should not accept the invitation; and in this debate with himself, he was holding the scales of speculation so even, as to give no certain indication which way they would turn, when some young friends of his own stamp broke in on his weighing business—tossed into one of them half

a dozen mad schemes for the next week, and the thing was decided in a moment.

IN his answer to Sir Thomas he was extremely polite ; but excused himself from coming down to the castle on account of indisposition : he had looked into Mrs. Osmond's will, but found there no particular orders in regard to where or how she chose to dispose of her remains—requested that Sir Thomas would have the goodness to give her a place in his vault, and to direct the funeral ; and concluded with saying, he should have the honour of thanking him personally, and settling the account of contingent expences, as soon as his physicians would give him leave to travel.

WHAT a regale was this elaborate epistle to the sight of his gay companions—they had no doubt but that he was the real heir of his grandmother ; and fifty thousand pounds in the hands of a young man, who from abundance had already learned to despise money, though he condescend to spend it, gave them no bad prospect of feeding their necessities out of his superfluities.—As to Edmund, the reputation of having this increase to his fortune, delighted him quite as much as the fortune itself could have done, had he been in possession of it : he that night treated his companions at a tavern, and lost some hundreds to them at play, just to keep up the farce.

BEFORE Sir Thomas's courier brought back Mr. Edmund Johnson's answer to his letter, Jaquiline's extreme grief for the loss of her dear lady, which at first prevented her from thinking of any thing but her

her own trouble, began a little to subside, and she very humbly enquired of Lady Gertrude's woman, if it was understood by Sir Thomas and his lady, in whose hands Mrs. Osmond's last will was deposited?

I know nothing of family affairs, Mrs. Jaquiline, replied the other, and therefore cannot inform you.

WELL then, Mrs. Grantly, said the first speaker, it will be worth your while to ask this question of Lady Gertrude; for I know there has been one made since we came to live at the castle, and that Miss Montreville is left every thing.

EVERY thing! repeated the astonished Mrs. Grantly. What my dear sweet young lady left every thing! did you say so, Mrs. Jaquiline?

EVERY thing, ma'am, except a trifling legacy or so to a tender, faithful, almost heart-broken servant; and she sighed so deeply, that it was impossible to mistake who was meant by this heart-broken servant.

MRS. Grantly, electrified by the news, did not stay to condole with, or to congratulate the relater of it, but made haste to tell Lady Gertrude what she had just heard; and was got as far as the door of the room where her ladyship was sitting with Sir Thomas, when, to her extreme mortification, she was forced to retire, on seeing a gentleman enter before her, who she was sure was a stranger: had it been a neighbour, she might not have acted with so much caution; and it sadly grieved her to carry back the burthen of her joyful intelligence, with which she was so eager

to enrich the principals of a family, to whom, for thirty years, she had been honestly and wholly devoted.

THE stranger who impeded the design of Mrs Grantly was no other than the lawyer, by whom the last will of Mrs. Osmond was made, and in whose hands it had been reposed : he heard of the testatrix's death by accident ? and, with less delay than is common to professional gentlemen, left town immediately to surrender his trust into the hands of Sir Thomas Montreville.

HAVING much difficulty to prevail on the father and mother of Adelaide to credit the business that brought him to the castle, he produced his credentials : they examined the writing, and knew the signing of the name to be the hand of Mrs Osmond— Surprise grew into astonishment, whilst their doubts were yielding to certainty. It would not be thought natural to say, that they could hear their daughter announced universal heiress to a fortune so splendend, and not congratulate each other with exquisite emotions of pleasure ;—but it is also true, that their rejoicings, on account of their unexpected acquisition, were not felt without a mixture of pain, for the disappointment it would occasion to Mrs. Johnson and her family.

WHEN the gentleman who brought the intelligence returned to town, which he did the next day, justly impressed with the hospitality and generosity of his munificent entertainers, Sir Thomas charged him with a letter to Edmund Johnson, explaining the
event

event that had taken place ; and, with the lawyer's permission, made a reference to him for the particulars of the will, and the injunctions to secrecy under which he received the directions for making it.

THE receipt of this letter from Sir Thomas, was no more than the giddy, dissolute Edmund expected, and for which he was prepared. He returned an answer so polite, so very respectful, that the baronet was much pleased, whilst not unreasonably this moderation was placed to the account of his violent passion for Adelaide ; and he pitied the torments under which he supposed the young man to be labouring : a sentiment of compassion that he could not divide with Lady Gertrude, because she had never heard a word of the matter, being as ignorant of this terrible, unfortunate attachment, as Edmund Johnson the victim was of his own sufferings.

Now it was that the fond mother of Adelaide, buoyed up by the most lively hope, from the present situation of affairs, that her suit would be attended with success, urged the recal of her daughter : hope is at all times fallacious, but most false when it is most flattering. Sir Thomas, on the one hand, wished to grant Lady Gertrude's maternal request, which was so exactly in unison with his own inclinations ; but, on the other, he felt himself restrained by what appeared to him the force of equity ; and it was thus that he reasoned away all the warmth with which she had presented her petition.

CONSIDER, dearest Gertrude, said he, that by procuring to ourselves the indulgence for which we
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are both equally anxious, we shall be invading the claims of another : when you had the goodness to consent to my proposal, that Adelaide should accompany her cousins, there was only one restriction, by which we are entitled to recall her before the return of the whole party ;—that one is removed ; the consequence of Mrs. Osmond's partiality cannot, we know, but be infinitely mortifying to the family, whose interest she has innocently superseded, and the step you propose to take, would it not, do you think, give them additional cause for displeasure ? Their son disinherited—our daughter established—to withdraw her from their protection at a moment so critical, surely they will take great offence, and may accuse us of intentionally adding the indelicacy of insult to the bitterness of disappointment.

YOUR arguments, replied Lady Gertrude, convince my reason, though they do not satisfy my impatience ; and if I submit to them, without more pain to my feelings than you would wish to inflict, it can be on one condition only.

NAME it ! said Sir Thomas ; and however difficult depend on my compliance.

WHEN one's desires, returned she, are confined within the bounds of rationality, the difficulty of accomplishing them cannot be very tremendous : the concession I expect from you is no more than what I am sure would have been proposed by yourself, had the possibility of such an event occurred to you, as that the resentment of Mrs. Johnson and her family may make Adelaide's remaining with them not merely
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ly disagreeable, but even insupportable ; and, in such a case, I am convinced you will have no objection to separate her from them.

GERTRUDE ! said Sir Thomas, looking on her with as much admiration and affection as if she had appeared to him at that moment in the bloom and beauty of eighteen, you are the best and most reasonable of your sex, in every character, whether wife, mother, mistress, or friend !—you outshine them all !—A very pretty love speech, which made after a union of twenty-five years standing, I think, may be adopted with much propriety at the conclusion of a chapter.

C H A P. XII.

Good fortune will gladden the heart of a friend, but sadden the heart of an enemy—Letters sent, and answers expected—A great example of female fortitude in one lady, and of feminine graces in another—A writer may be thought impertinantly communicative, if tuning the passions is not sometimes left to the reader's own understanding.

HUMANITY and delicacy were probably consulted in the conference which I have just been relating ; and the amicable manner in which it ended equally pleased both parties. Lady Gertrude set about communicating the glad tidings to the friends where it would be most welcomely received ; and Sir Thomas did not delay to send the necessary information, where it was impossible to suppose its reception would be marked with any flattering tokens of approbation.

BEFORE these momentous dispatches were sent away, the bulk of which was much increased by the inclosures to Miss Montreville, Sir Thomas consulted his wife on what he had written to the Johnlons ; received her full approbation, and the treaty was again renewed, and doubly ratified, that it should,
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in a great measure, depend on the answers to these letters—whether Miss Montreville should continue where she then was, or return home, and leave the party behind her. In which latter case it was determined, that Mrs. Grantly should go over to conduct her from Paris ; and that they should wait to receive her at Dover.

THESE returns, so anxiously expected by Lady Gertrude, were deferred for no longer time than what the distance between the two countries made unavoidable ; so that the last offices that could be performed for Mrs. Osmond, had been over but three days when they arrived ; and the mother of Adelaide trembled with emotions of hope, doubt, and fear, combined together, whilst the almost as anxious father was breaking the seal of Mrs. Johnson's letter ; which had the compliment conferred on it of being examined even before the other which accompanied it, though that other was from their daughter.

SIR Thomas read the contents aloud ; and as he read them, his honest countenance displayed evident testimony to the satisfaction they gave him ; whilst Lady Gertrude sat by his side, listening with the air of a person petrified with astonishment. The curious reader may wish to hear what this letter contained ; the whole contents I cannot lay before you, but the purport of them I will.

MRS. Johnson congratulated them on their good fortune, without betraying envy at their possessing it, or even letting fall one word of resentment, which

might seem to glance towards the memory of her grandmother, for the change in her inclinations; on the contrary, she justly observed, their kindness merited the distinction made in their favour; and assured them, that she could answer for her dear son, who was the least selfish of mankind, as well as for her own sentiments on the occasion, that their long-established expectations would be relinquished without murmuring: this cheerful resignation to the will of destiny, she added, may create some approbation to my son, at least, if it was not too easily understood that his poor mind is occupied by other cares than those that are of a mercenary nature; but what credit can redound on me, if I lay down my ill-concerted hopes, and do not repine that another has realized them, when it is known that I consider the transition in the light of a mother, who, loving her children equally well, sees the fortune of one established on the ruins of another.— Yet still the family interest preserved its affections unshaken, and its riches not diminished.—To have given such a sentiment as this in any but Mrs. Johnson's own words, would be an act of injustice, with which I am not willing to accuse myself, and if it will be any guide to those readers, who, having no feelings of their own, are apt to adopt those of other people, I shall tell them, for example sake, that Sir Thomas Montreville dropped many tears over this remarkable paragraph in Mrs. Johnson's epistle—some dedicated to Edmund's hopeless state, and some to the exquisite goodness of Mrs. Johnson herself. There were a great many other words set to the same tune, equally soft, sweet, and harmonious; which were all concluded in the earnest request, that she might

might still be considered of consequence enough to be entrusted with the charge of Miss Montreville till their little pleasant excursion was finished, when she would bring her back in safety to her happy parents, and rejoice with them in the possession of a daughter, whose beauty and amiable qualities reflected honour on the most distant branches of the family—thanked them a thousand times for the confidence they had, and she trusted would, continue still to repose in her—once more assuring them, that the lovely Adelaide was not the less her favourite for being the heiress of her good old grandmother, whose remains she should weep over when she came next to the castle, where she intended making a long visit, on her return to Britain.

My dear! cried Sir Thomas, when he was arrived at the bottom of this well filled paper, some parts of which he read more than once over—have I been deceived in Mrs. Johnson, or have I deceived you, when I said she had the best heart in the world?—How nobly does she receive the intelligence, which would have driven almost any other woman to despair. She loves our daughter as her own—has a sisterly affection for ourselves.—What a singular instance of a spirit without guile!—Indeed it is such an instance, as, I confess, has quite unmanned me.

It is a very extraordinary one, indeed, replied Lady Gertrude; which were the first words that escaped her lips from the beginning to the end of the epistle;—and I am impatient to know if the truth of it is corroborated by what my daughter will say to us in her letter.—This too was opened—it did, in reality,

reality, not only corroborate but confirm Mrs Johnson's good dispositions ; and Lady Gertrude, though never of a very sanguine turn, was almost as well satisfied as her lord and master.

GRATEFUL, gentle, and pathetic, were the expressions of Adelaide, whilst lamenting the death by which she was so much enriched beyond her hopes—perhaps beyond her wishes. She seemed much less affected with joy at the bounty of her grandmother, than afflicted with sadness for the loss of that venerable parent. The manner in which she explained her feelings on this latter occasion, might have made one believe it was a tender nurse moaning over the child she had delighted to cherish, and as if she feared it had pined itself to death, because she had cruelly forsaken it. Sir Thomas had wept at some parts of Mrs. Johnson's letter, but Lady Gertrude's tears of pleasure were reserved for that of her daughter's; whose sweet and natural feelings, so simply drawn, yet so strongly coloured, was a picture she was never weary of admiring. When speaking of Mrs. Johnson—I am truly sensible, said Adelaide, of her extraordinary goodness, and shall enjoy my fortune with comfort, if I am allowed to return one half of my legacy to that family, for whom the whole was once intended—I do not mean that I will give it back to Mr. Edmund, because I never liked him ; besides, he has quite enough without it—and more, I believe, than he knows what to do with ; but if it is presented to his sisters, it will be the same thing.—Do not, my dearest papa and mama, deny this request to your Adelaide ; otherwise I fear my riches will bring with them

them more pain than pleasure:—the first purchase I would willingly make, is to secure my own approbation; and I am so deeply in debt to the extreme kindness of Mrs. Johnson, and to the civilities of all her family, that I have no other way of quitting scores with my own conscience, but by convincing them I can be disinterested as they are.—Pardon then my presumption, and permit me to be grateful, that I may be contented; and generous, that I may be happy.—They might have been cold—they might have been cross—distant—uncivil—after suffering so great a loss and upon my account:—but, instead of coldness, crossness, and incivility, I experienced nothing but increasing warmth of kindness, good humour, and so much affection, that I must really think that they rather rejoice at than envy my good fortune.—I have not, added she, said a word to them yet of my intentions; nor shall I be so impertinent ever to take any step, of much less importance than this, before I know that it will be agreeable to you, and that I have both your permissions for doing it.

It would be just about as reasonable that I should say—it is light—it is dark—it is warm—or it is cold—as if seeing and feeling were properties confined to myself, and that nobody could know what was the time, or what was the season, except I announced it to them—yes, it would be exactly the same thing, if I was to tell you that Sir Thomas and Lady Gertrude rejoiced over this charming letter from their charming daughter; and that they acknowledged, with gratitude to God, and to each other with rapture, that they were the most favoured and the the most happy of parents.

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IN answer to this request, so irresistibly enforced by Adelaide, she received, by the next packet, a *carteblanche*, to act and do whatever she pleased.— They laid no restraint on her generous intentions, except, that they strongly recommended a profound silence on the subject till she came back to England; by which time her affairs would all be regulated, so that the meditated restitution might be made without trouble, and in a manner least likely to hurt the delicacy of the parties who were to receive a benefit from the division of her fortune. Sir Thomas asked what poor Edmund had done to make her dislike him, and to exclude him from any share in her favour: I should be sorry, said he, merrily, in your present predicament, and for the sake of somebody else, that you should be in love with him; yet Edmund is a worthy fellow—he is also unfortunate, and entitled to a better portion in your good opinion than you are inclined to allow him.

ADELAIDE received the indulgence of being permitted to gratify her benevolent wishes with extreme satisfaction; she poured out her whole artless soul in grateful acknowledgments to these dear parents, and faithfully promised, on her part, to obey their command of silence with filial exactness.

SEVERAL letters passed between Adelaide and her parents, after this great plan had been finally adjusted, every one of which was fraught with new proofs of Mrs. Johnson's attention to her health, to her pleasures, to her interest; and these were always accompanied by new and more lively professions of gratitude,

gratitude, for kindneſſes that ſeemed almoſt to oppreſs her by their weight and magnitude ; ſo that Lady Gertrude became quite reconciled to what ſhe had before only ſubmitted ; the conſent ſhe had given to her going abroad was exacted, not obtained, and approbation had not till now followed the ſacrifices ſhe then made, of her internal peace, and deareſt inclinations ; but every thing had turned out better than ſhe expected——Adelaide was under the protection of tender relations——Adelaide was happy——and the peace of Adelaide's mother returned again renovated, and again took its port in her boſom.

C H A P.

C H A P. XIII.

Reasons why the book must be compleated—Unmodern festivity—Unmodern cookery—Unmodern guest—Unmodern humility—And unmodern charity A cricket match—Its consequences—A wise mother, and a dutiful son.

I LEFT Lady Gertrude Montreville happy at the conclusion of my last chapter ; and, at the beginning of the present, I find her in the same state of tranquillity, or rather considerably increased, by her son William's return from Oxford, to spend a short recess with his friends at the castle.——I should like to finish my book here, and go no farther.—But what end would it answer ?—I might, indeed, close the curtain—but would not the busy imagination try to take a peep of what was concealed behind it, and perhaps see events even more terrible than I shall exhibit them ?—though that will be terrible enough, because the storm is never so dark and tremendous as when it overwhelms by surprise the lovely face of an unclouded atmosphere.

Miss Montreville had been gone from the castle three months, and her brother come back to it three days, when great preparations were beginning to go forward for the reception of much company, who never failed to honour Sir Thomas with their presence on every anniversary of his wife's birth-day. They were all neighbours, and of so little ceremony that no French cooks were hired to spoil their dishes; no confectioners flying down in post-chaises from London, to furnish their desserts; no ortolans at a guinea a piece; no tokay at a guinea a pint:—It was not the feast of a great man, feasting men still greater than himself—but of a hospitable landlord, and a charitable christian. His company was divided into three classes—his tenantry—his mechanics—and his labourers. The first, with their wives and daughters, were entertained in the great hall; Lady Gertrude presided, and was assisted by Sir Thomas in doing the honours of the table.—Those for the other two were spread in the park, attended by all the family servants who were not occupied at the first—these I have called Sir Thomas's company. There are yet a class that I have not mentioned, by far more numerous than her other three put together, which I shall rather call his children, because with fatherly kindness, he fed the poor and cherished the needy.

It had been a custom many years, on this day of celebration, for the farmers' sons, who were the best cricket-players, to assemble in the park at an early hour; when, having decided the match, Sir Thomas, who delighted in the exercise, and was a professed critic, always gave a handsome gratuity to the winning

ning party—but never without bestowing something on the losers, to keep them in good humour, and to inspire them with the spirit of emulation, unincumbered by the entanglements of envy

THE day arrived—six was the hour appointed for the young men to begin the contest—but it was eight before they were joined by Sir Thomas. He had enquired of his son's servant if he was risen ; and hearing that he was still asleep, ordered that he should not be disturbed.—Tender but fatal precaution!—for fear of breaking his repose one moment earlier than it would break of its own accord—for how many months was it afterwards utterly destroyed!—William would have taken the bat from your hand—he would have used it as you did—but not have paid the forfeit that you paid.

ONE of the party engaged being seized with a sudden vertigo, the bat fell out of his hand ; Sir Thomas, who stood near, took it up, bid him sit down till he was recovered, and he would take his place in the meantime. The match continued an hour—The first player would have come in, but Sir Thomas, delighted with his post, kept it to the end ; and, at last, found himself on the losing side, the blame of which laying on his own want of skill, merely that he might do a generous action under the colour of a just one, he made his rewards equally considerable to both parties, and returned to the castle.

HEATED by exercise, he threw himself on a chair, and called for a glass of cold water—neither his wife
nor

nor his son were present to prevent his design—he swallowed the pleasant but treacherous beverage, and in eighteen hours after fell a martyr to the fatal indulgence.—He was found by his family, when they met at breakfast, beginning to feel the first effects of his indiscretion, though, to this hour, they are not informed to what cause they owed their irretrievable misfortune—he did not declare it himself—and the servant who innocently obeyed his commands was deterred from explaining it, by the consequences that had attended this ever-after regretted act of obedience.

INFLAMED bowels was the immediate signal of approaching dissolution: he was visited by the faculty, who exerted their skill to no purpose; and the agonies preceding his last sigh were so violent, that it was fortunate he had not left the settling of his affairs to these moments of torture, when he would not have found it in his power to arrange them:—on the contrary, every stage he had regulated his actions and his concerns with such equitable exactness, as to leave no anxiety on his mind for the future—the best mode by which a rational being can smooth his passage from this world to the next.

LADY Gertrude must infallibly have sunk under this so sudden, so heavy dispensation, but for the presence of her beloved son, now Sir William Montreville, who said and did all that could be done or said by a tender, dutiful, amiable, manly youth of nineteen, to soothe, comfort, and console his widowed parent.

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When he proposed that Mrs. Grantly should be dispatched to bring home his sister—not being able to leave his mother in the very spring-tide of her affliction, to go for her himself ; he pressed the proposal with so much solicitude as any other widow in the world must have yielded to—there is no other woman but would have yielded to the gratification so eagerly desired, so strongly supported.—But the motive from which she rejected it does her too much honour not to make its way into the world, and, whilst I am giving it a place in these pages, I hope, but do not expect, that all modern widows will follow her example ; and, though they may not be able, like her, to reflect that they have fulfilled their duty to a living husband, they may yet learn to shew respect to the memory of a dead one.

CEASE, dear William, said Lady Gertrude to force that happiness upon me which I cannot embrace without violating a superior duty.—Do you forget the established inclinations of your revered father, how determined he was that Adelaide should continue with his relations till they brought her back to us ? and shall his will, which in life we all venerated, in death be considered less binding, less sacred ?

If this decision had not silenced the pleader, and added something more to his fund of filial love and respect, though already abounding, all I can say is, that he would not have deserved the blessing of such another woman for his wife as Lady Gertrude. All
hopes

hopes of his sisters return being thus put to flight, the melancholy office of acquainting her that they had no longer a father devolved on him—and how tenderly did he apply the balsam after the wound was given!—His mother though she could hardly open her sorrow-swollen eyes, added a few lines to his letter, as a certificate of her health; conveying also a request, formed to imply a command that she would continue the guest of her cousins, for as many months longer as they remained on the continent. When they were ready to return, her brother, she said, would join Mrs. Johnson's party, either in Switzerland, or at Paris, and reconduct them to Britain.

I HOPE my readers will be so good as to imagine what such a daughter as Miss Montreville must have felt for the loss of such a father as Sir Thomas, it being very much beyond my powers to describe it:—her answers breathed the very soul of affliction—and they breathed too the soul of resignation.——Her griefs were divided, not diminished.——She had a father *lost*, and a mother *unhappy*, to divide them—but what to diminish them? Had she been permitted to join so dear a mother, she would have encountered difficulties, dangers, even have defied death itself—but to disobey the command of that mother was impossible. Sir William had many other letters to write, and answers to receive on the same painful occasion: the parties concerned being yet unknown, I shall also let them remain unnoticed.

I ACKNOWLEDGE, reader, it is the most natural wish that can be formed.—What?—Why, that I should tell you exactly how Sir Thomas Montreville
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left his wordly affairs, and make you capable of judging whether his riches are above or below your estimation of them. I love the maxim of doing as I would be done by ; though, from what I have learnt in my short experience of the world, its modes and its manners, a too strict observance of it may render me liable to the charge of singularity ; as I know it has, in my time at least, been the fashion to treat this golden rule with little consideration, and even less respect.

GUESSING, then, at your wishes, by what my own would have been supposing our situations reversed—you the writer, and I the reader of this book ;—and being conscious that nobody would have wanted more than myself to know the minutiae of every thing, I shall set about explaining what, no doubt, you have already surmised, that Sir Thomas Montreville was abundantly rich at his death, and that he carried none of his riches with him, but such as he wisely laid out in good deeds in his life-time, and these followed him. It would never have entered into my head to have introduced a poor hero or a poor heroine, and then have sent them to make their way through the circles of fashion ; it would have been subjecting them to insult, and myself to the charge of knowing less than I really do know, of the circles into which I should so foolishly have ushered them.

SIR Thomas Montreville's real estates, unincumbered by debts of any kind, netted nine thousand seven hundred pounds a year, and was charged with a jointure

jointure of two thousand, which, after Lady Gertrude, was made in settlement to younger children; and there being none to share with Adelaide in that part of the inheritance, together with her grandmother's legacy, it gave her no mean rank on the list of fortunes; on those of beauty, modesty, and accomplishments, none went before her.

IF riches could have secured happiness, Miss Montreville would have been happy; if they could have purchased comfort, Lady Gertrude would have been comforted.—But, alas! though the castle was still her own, the dear master of it was gone for ever! She might have solaced herself in many widow-like consolations, but she rejected them all.

BESIDES her jointure, Sir Thomas had bequeathed to her all his personals, and burthened his son with another yearly thousand for the life of his mother; and, after her decease, to go back into its proper channel, which left him at present in possession only of an annual six thousand seven hundred pounds. I do not know if my fair readers will like him the better for it; but certain it is that, so far from thinking his father had done too much for his mother, and too little for himself, had Sir Thomas made an equal division of his fortune, he would still have thought that Lady Gertrude had less than she deserved.

FULL of duty, kindness, and affection, superior to any mercenary considerations, was the soul of Sir William Montreville: the opinion his father entertained

tained both of his head and heart, will be understood by his leaving him, at the early age of nineteen, without guardians, in full possession of his hereditary estates, and the uncontrouled master of his own actions. Whilst I acknowledge such an extraordinary instance of paternal confidence highly honourable to the son, and a graceful feature in the character of his father, I do not advise all fathers to follow the example of Sir Thomas, any more than I would advise one sort of medicine for all sorts of complaints, lest what is a cordial to one constitution, administered to another might work to its destruction.

SIR William Montreville, whose person I am not just now at leisure to describe, remained at the castle two months after the death of his father; and accounted every hour of that time, which was not dedicated to the consolation of his mother, or that did not bring with it some flattering promise that she would in time be reconciled to her destiny, to these hopes, the letters of Adelaide, and the passing away of so many heavy hours, by which they were divided, very much contributed.

WHEN the last term which he was obliged to keep demanded his presence at Oxford, he had so great difficulty to tear himself from the side of his only remaining parent, that she was forced to exert herself, and insist on his leaving her: she had the softness, but not the weakness of her sex, to combat; for the sake of self-indulgence, she scorned to sacrifice the real interest of a son so deservedly dear to her, and would have held it a sin against nature to have stopped, with
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her tears, the progress of an education commenced and pursued under the most brilliant prognostics.

ONE day in particular, that he was pressing her very hardly on the old subject, of permitting him to stay longer with her, the consequence of which, she knew, would be his losing a very essential term at the university—William, said she, in a low but firm voice, why will you thus tempt me to be cruel both to you and to myself? I am penetrated with your tenderness; but do you expect that I can approve the loss of these precious moments—so fruitful at your time of life—so full of promise—and which you are but too willing to sacrifice?—and to what?—to your mother's weakness? She will not accept the sacrifice; she will not seek her own advantage in your disadvantage—No! my beloved son, no!—give me not cause to reproach my heart with an error which I cannot but see—and see and avoid.—Go then, if it be only to preserve your esteem, that when we meet again, I may not regret myself of having injured you, if not by my own, but by a very reprehensible affection—Go, William! and while I think of you, I will live for you.

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C H A P. XIV.

Rational Motives for a painful separation—Rational request—Rational exertion—Rational mode of accounting for what seldom happens in the connection between great people and little people—Rational excuse for maternal partiality—Rational balsam for deep sorrow : and, take it all in all, a very rational chapter.

William finding that his remaining longer at home by being detrimental to his studies, would rather than forward the recovery of Lady's spirits, he promised to obey her command. But not unconditionally, my dear mother, whatever will most contribute to your happiness shall be the rule of my actions ; but you must consent to my requisition, if you would not send me from you quite broken hearted.

AND what is there that I am capable of refusing, my son ? she replied, pressing a smile into her face as if to gain a temporary victory over her melancholy.

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You must promise me, said he, that the dear smile which now rises on your countenance, and fills me with gladness, shall not be hastily vanquished by that gloomy tyrant grief, which is the bitterest of its enemies :—will you not cherish a visitant so feeble ?—will you not arm in its defence ?—Cheerfulness is the friend to health ; and on your health depends the absolute fate of Adelaide's felicity, as well as my own.

NOR in vain, said she, shall it depend on me, if my best efforts can secure it ; and, when we meet again, it shall not be my fault if you are dissatisfied with the progress I shall have made in the lesson you have set me.—Much more of the same tender conversation passed between them, on the eve of his departure for Oxford ; nor would Sir William put his foot in the stirrup until she had solemnly engaged to recal him, if, during the six weeks it was necessary he should be absent, her health and spirits did not amend in proportion to her exertions, and his own but half-fledged expectations.

LADY Gertrude, who had no doublings in her character, and would not have deceived her children even to have cheated them into happiness, seriously set about the reformation on which she had determined ; and the best auxiliaries she could call upon, in aid of this great undertaking, was the army of blessings which, as a mother she still commanded, though those of a wife had all deserted from her standard : in this task she was also assisted by many of her kind neighbours, with whom Sir Thomas and she had lived on terms of uninterrupted good-fellowship for a long

long succession of years ; particularly the clergyman of the parish and his wife, who were great favourites at the castle. It may be wondered at and I own it is novel, that these people of rank and fortune, so much superior to their neighbours, should condescend to live amongst them on terms of good-fellowship ; as the very phrase itself seems to signify something more than that common sort of distant civility by which the great think they are exalted, and the little are certainly debased. I believe there is no other way of accounting for this odd turn of mind in Sir Thomas and Lady Gertrude Montreville, but by supposing that their hearts were so fully occupied, by nature, with every sort of virtue, as to leave no room for education or fashion to stuff them with any of their own superb furniture.

LADY Gertrude having experienced that thoughtfulness and solitude added fuel to the sadness that consumed her, and to which her delicate constitution had already nearly been the sacrifice, did not suffer a moment of her time to be unemployed ; nor refused the visits of such of her friends as she knew would talk to her only of those precious relics she still retained of her former domestic treasures.—Doating alike on her children, she had still a sort of interesting preference for Adelaide—that was due to her defenceless sex—to her peculiar softness—and to the immense distance by which they were divided : every day brought the prospect of their re-union nearer ; she never failed of receiving one letter weekly, sometimes two from this beloved daughter ; and oh ! what delight did she take, not only in reading them

them herself, but to Mr. and Mrs. Armatage, or any other of her most favoured intimates! and the subject of one letter always found them in conversation till the arrival of another.

SIR William's tedious six weeks which he was forced to pass in banishment from his widowed mother being expired, he flew back to the castle, and was transported to find Lady Gertrude's health considerably improved; and her mind, if not restored to cheerfulness, yet neither was it under the absolute dominion of melancholy.—One month only remained for expectation to work upon; the end of that time was fixed for the travellers' return, and in another fortnight Sir William proposed meeting them at Paris.

ALREADY had the tenderest of mothers stretched out her maternal arms to embrace the shadow of happiness whilst the substance was far—ah! how far removed from her grasp! Her thoughts for ever occupied by the same idea, she acted entirely under the influence of it, and began to make preparations for the return of that object who was to realize her hopes, banish her fears, and gratify her wishes.—She gave directions, and saw that they were executed, for fitting up the apartment Adelaide called her own; it was enlarged, by the addition of a capital room; stocked from her own library with the best publications, in all languages: musical instruments of all sorts; with beautiful copartments, to accommodate her favourite foreign birds, of which she had a large collection

lection ; and the number of them had not decreased in the many months of her absence.—Lady Gertrude, busied in a thousand little delicate attentions, such as these for the reception of Miss Montreville, felt herself more at ease than she had yet been since the decease of Sir Thomas.—It was a union of affection which was thus disturbed by the unexpected consequences of a cricket-match—inclination brought them together, and every passing year of their marriage had added something to the solidity, if not to the warmth of their mutual attachment, when, for the sake of her family, she first attempted to combat with grief ; the stern invader had retired only from her face to entrench itself in the more hidden recesses of her mind :—but whilst delightfully engaged in arranging every thing that could give use or beauty to her daughter's apartment, this concealed enemy to her repose shewed indications of quitting its post, enough at least to flatter her son and her friends, that it had not taken up its residence, never to be dispossessed.

I HAVE told you, with what reluctance Lady Gertrude parted from the half-blown rose which grew to her fond heart, and flourished in the shades of retirement ; neither did I conceal from you how she afterwards became reconciled to inevitable separation ; and that she began to think better of Mrs. Johnson than she had ever thought of her before : but I have not explained to you what sort of sentiments were entertained by Sir William Montreville, for the conductress of his sister in a foreign country, and I am now about to atone for my former omission.

WHEN

WHEN Sir Thomas wrote to his son at Oxford, that Adelaide was to attend her cousins on their excursion to the continent, he also informed him that every thing was finally settled for their departure in the course of a few weeks :—after this declaration, Sir William knew it would be in vain for him to interfere, either by giving his advice, or throwing in his objections ; yet objections he had, and such as might not have wanted their proper weight with any man less decided in his resolutions, and less the dupe of Mrs. Johnson than he knew his father to be.—Young as he was, the developement of her-hypocritical character had been no difficult task for his inquisitive penetration ; and one circumstance in particular had impressed his mind with an early aversion, strong as it was invincible : he had caught her in the very fact of abusing the greatest favourites his heart ever acknowledged to his father—when, but the moment before, the very same object had been honoured with her most tender caresses ; and not knowing that duplicity is no crime in the world of fashion, but is rather considered as a proof of good breeding, he openly accused her, in the presence of Sir Thomas, in whose honest mind she was trying to lay her poison, with harbouring views base, incendiary, and malicious.

Mrs. Johnson, instead of flying into a rage, or giving way to anger at the stripling's impetuosity, being only fifteen when this *fracas* happened—instead of telling him he was an impertinent puppy—instead of bidding Sir Thomas chastise his insolence, Mrs. Johnson condescended to vindicate her meaning, and explained

explained it away with so much mildness as served to conciliate the good opinion of the father ; but established in the son a hatred for her art, that strengthened with the growth of his rational faculties, till, from incessant observation, he could not look on her without disgust, or hear her speak without being sensible to an impression of horror, for which he was not himself able to account : these sentiments he privately indulged, but did not communicate them to any body. I have a right, said he, to form opinions for myself, but not to force them upon others : he was ever after distantly civil to Mrs. Johnson, when he could not contrive to be absent from the castle at such times as she came there on her annual visits : but his abhorrence of her deep-folded character continued in equal force, whether she was at the distance of a hundred miles, or in the same room with himself.

He loved his sister ; there was but one young female in the world whom he loved better.—He grieved at his father's determination to trust this dear sister with the woman who, of all others, William would have objected to for the office of governante to a daughter of his own.—Several times he read over Sir Thomas's letter, and the oftner he perused it, the more he was convinced it would be impossible to set aside the intention so fully established : he therefore did not attempt to argue the matter with his father ; but, feeling what would be the conflicts of Lady Gertrude to be separated from Adelaide, he strove to conquer his own vexation, that he might, on re-joining the family, be more equal to the task of comforting his mother.

MRS.

Mrs. Johnson's first letter, after the decease of Mrs. Osmond, where her own disappointment seemed to be swallowed up in her predilection for Miss Montreville, did not produce much change in his former sentiments towards the writer of it :—he thought it a virtue over-acted ; and Nature, he knew, never performed in caricature : he silently allowed it to be a *chef d'œuvre* ; but could not fathom the depth of her covered intentions.

C H A P. XV.

A good choice of a confidant—A journey and voyage in perspective, with the distance reduced—A mother's anxiety over-ruled by speculative reasonings—A word to self-tormentors—Leave-taking, and the progress of fallacious hope—A just observation seasonably applied—Terrors advancing, terrors retreating—The interruption.

THE only confidant Sir William intrusted with his private opinion of Mrs. Johnson's imperfections was Mr. Armatage, who was the most unfitted of all mankind to reason him out of his prejudices, having himself formed ideas of that lady very similar to those by which his young friend was decidedly governed; they often talked over the subject of Mrs. Johnson's duplicity between themselves, but never disturbed the calm security of Lady Gertrude's soul, by insinuating their own opinions into it.

ONE week only remained unexpired to the dawn of that day when Sir William proposed setting out to join his sister in Paris; and to re-unite to her parent-tree the fairest blossom that ever bloomed in the garden of Paradise.

Miss Montreville's late letters had been, or her mother fancied they were, written with something like dispirited languor, and certainly they were shorter than Adelaide was accustomed to write : but as she made no complaints of her health, and continued to speak of her companions in the usual terms of approbation, Lady Gertrude would not permit the alarm, which at first laid hold of maternal anxiety, to spread its contagion over her active mind ; but reasoned herself into a belief that the change proceeded from a fatigue of travelling, the hurry of dissipation, or some such local cause.—Those who can feel any gratification in being the artificers of their own perplexities, might not only have dwelt on the imaginary alteration in the style of Miss Montreville, and the shortness of her two last letters, but have found richer food to nourish their brood of tortures, at the still more alarming source of Adelaide's total silence, for eight days preceding her brother's departure, to fulfil the engagement he had made of meeting the party at Paris. The eagerness of self-tormentors is generally so great to fix their own fate, that they forget or neglect to enquire for a remedy to their evils amongst the causes of reason or nature. Lady Gertrude rested on them for her repose, and found in the perpetual contrariety of winds; during the time that no letters arrived, a natural and sufficient reason for her disappointment.

LADY Gertrude stood at the hall door as her son stepped into a carriage drawn by six horses that were to convey him to Dover ; and whilst, with moistened eyes, she followed the track of his wheels as far as she

she could trace them, a stranger knocked at the door of her heart, to whom she could no longer refuse admittance ; this stranger was in reality joy, though it stole into her bosom under the disguise of expectation.—William ! cried she, William is gone, and will soon again return with my precious Adelaide ! I shall hold them once more in my arms, and oh, God ! grant that I never more, till it is thy will to call me hence, be separated from my children !

IN the full tide of prosperity, whatever sails upon the bosom of fatality glides smoothly, looks gaily, and promises fairly ; but if fortune is adverse, and we struggle against the current of our crosses with all our might, a thousand rocks arise to impede our exertions, and a thousand quicksands are opened to swallow up our hopes.—To those of my readers whose conscience will tell them how much they have aided in making a philosopher, I particularly address my earliest attempt at moralizing.

THE observation I have thus applied is indebted for its origin to a circumstance that attended the departure of Sir William from the castle ; for the wind that before had blown full upon the coast of France, and which Lady Gertrude devoutly prayed might continue in the same disposition till it had waisted her son to the continent—that cruel wind, before he had finished his inland journey, turned exactly about, and discharged itself with such violence as, against all possibility of crossing the channel, detained him at Dover nine days, in a state of the utmost impatience. On the tenth, it was almost as favourable for one
shore

shore as the other, being decidedly for neither ; and he seized on the first wavering moment, to put himself on board the packet. He had written twice to his mother ; but did not request to hear from her, as he every instant expected to be off.

THESE winds, which retarded the expedition of her son, did not add to the comfort of Lady Gertrude, by bringing her either intelligence from her daughter or Mrs. Johnson : she imagined, or tried to imagine, that the cause of this continued silence arose from their expectation of Sir William ; and even flattered herself, that her not hearing, was an indication that she should see, even before she had expected, them :—so naturally does a well turned mind rather incline to the bright than the gloomy side of the prospect before it.

BUT fortitude long tried, like gold long beaten, will lose its substance, though not its value. The first four days of her son's absence, and of the fair winds that might have brought accounts from her daughter, were, as I have told you, passed by Lady Gertrude in a state of composure, which owed its source to no common degree of christian magnanimity. But, alas ! I am forced to say, that after the first four days, the hours, the minutes, the moments, moved heavily, as she counted their progress : her waking thoughts were filled with apprehensions, and her dreams disturbed by frightful visions—still she had the greatness not to declare the doubts by which her peace was undermined ; yet, had the few friends she
admitted

admitted to her society been very keen observers, the ravages this concealed mischief was making on her health and spirits could not have been concealed. I know I could make you weep, if I were to describe what were her feelings—But why cheat you of your tears, when I cannot use them to my own advantage? Soon, too soon they will flow apace, if the liquid parts of thy composition are not all dried up, and thy heart become an absolute petrification.

On the eleventh day in which Lady Gertrude had been left to her own solitary companionship, several letters were brought from the neighbouring post-office. Her eager eyes look to find one from her daughter—she finds it not—a single tear steals down her cheek ; it is the offspring of disappointment ; a twin sigh struggles also for birth, but she suppresses it at the sight of her son's writing, and a gleam of joy brightens her features as she breaks asunder the seal of his epistle : the contents are swallowed with avidity, and every word is fraught with magical influence, to combat the doubts, the fears, the apprehensions, that oppress her gentle bosom : she is no longer sensible to any emotions but those of rapture.—In the fulness of its own language she exclaims—By this time he must have embraced his beloved sister !—For he has written her, at the conclusion of a very long letter, that in ten minutes he shall be on his voyage to Calais ; and adds, that he shall close his eyes no more till he can send her news of Adelaide, and fix the time for their returning together ; which he assures her shall be at no great distance.

AND

AND who was it that gave thee these fond assurances, wretched, but amiable mother? Man may project, but God only can execute—better had it been that thou hadst not opened the gates of thy imagination to receive happiness, only that misery might enter thy tranquillized soul, with the greater, the more terrible impetuosity.

BESIDES the letter Lady Gertrude had opened from her son, there were many others addressed to Sir William Montreville, and those she carefully placed on the chimney-piece, that she might not forget to inclose them in her next dispatches.—Amongst the number was one in a miserable female hand, and worse female orthography; there was not a single monosyllable spelt right in the whole direction; which made her wonder how it had ever found its way to the castle;—she observed that it bore a foreign post-stamp; yet it never occurred to her now satisfied mind, that this curious epistle could in any manner affect the concerns of her family: her rational faculties of accounting for every thing being restored by the invigorating and pleasant cordial she had just received from the hand of her son, she supposed this attempt at letter-writing must come from some needy French woman, some poor petitioner, who, having experienced the bounty of her daughter, had also obtained from one of the servants a direction to Sir William, with the hope of being equally successful in her application to him.

THE supposition was founded in reason, as the resolution she took of forwarding it to her son was
certainly

certainly grounded in the peculiar benevolence of her own disposition; she therefore gave it a post of honour near Sir William's other correspondents, and with a heart quite at ease, sat down to write very long letters to the two very dearest objects of her animated affections. Whilst thus delightfully employed, being come towards the middle of the second page, her eyes were drawn from the paper by the entrance of Mr. Armatage; they were fixed upon his countenance, and she started.

C H A P. XVI.

*The alarm—The conversation—The explanation—
The offices of friendship—The fainting—The
recovery—The recital—And the struggles of
fortitude.*

LADY Gertrude started—it was not the agitation of surprise—it was the violence of ill-boding alarm that arrested her hand, and almost stopped her vital respiration: to her the countenance of Mr. Armatage appeared a black-lettered volume, in which was written a tissue of mournful adventures.—My dear Sir!—she could utter no more.—

YOUR ladyship will pardon me, if—he sat down by her side, threw his eyes on the carpet, and remained silent.

WHAT is the matter? cried Lady Gertrude—is it for me or for yourself that you are thus afflicted, thus discomposed!

Yes, said he, recovering himself a little; I am at this moment struggling with a misfortune that has

has vanquished my fortitude, and leaves me weaker than an infant!

GOOD God! my excellent friend, what has happened to Mrs. Armatage?—He made no answer, but lifting up his eyes, he fixed them on her face with an expression so pity-moving, so full of anguish, so critically directed, as plainly spoke, that it was herself who was the sole object of his commiseration.

LADY Gertrude rose from her seat; her looks were awfully serene, but it was the serenity of despair—Confirm my wretchedness! cried she—for now you see I am able to bear it.

HER air, her words, the tone of her voice, were an abstract of all that could affect the passions, and restored Mr. Armatage to the powers of recollection: he also stood up, and supporting himself by resting one of his trembling hands on the table, asked her with as much firmness as he could command, whether she had that day received any letters from the continent.

HER negative, to a question so decidedly announcing her fate, was delivered in a sort of convulsive scream! that made him lay hold of both her hands, which were wetted with the manly tears of unavailing sympathy; for moments there certainly are of supreme misery, when even the kindest offices of sympathy are disregarded, if not offensive. In exquisite grief, I believe, there is a sort of insatiation,
that

that makes the victim think no luxury equal to that of indulging it, and to whose ears the sounds of consolation are harsh and discordant.

Mrs. Armatage, who had been waiting outside the door, was now called upon by her husband, on finding Lady Gertrude panting for breath, and ready to faint.—O come! he cried, come to my assistance!—The summons was instantly obeyed, and between them they lifted the almost senseless parent, laid her on a sofa, and Mrs. Armatage, being provided with hartshorn, knelt down by her side, poured out some of the drops, and chafed the moist temples of her friend, which the dews of death seemed already to have overspread.

I AM not dying, said she in a voice that apparently contradicted the assertion—but tell me—tell me, she added in a higher tone, to which agony had given force—Oh! if you have mercy, tell me—is it my son—is it my daughter—or am I deprived of both?

It is not Sir William! faltered out the good divine—It is not Sir William! echoed his wife

THEN, cried she, it is my blessed Adelaide—and I shall see her no more!—As she spoke her head fell on the bosom of Mrs. Armatage.

BEFORE these good people had left their own house, to execute their heart-rending commission, they

they had summoned the family physician to attend immediately at the castle, foreseeing how much occasion there would be for all his skill to preserve the life of their beloved neighbour, whose extreme sensibility was very much against her surviving a shock so insupportably tremendous, as the final separation from an only daughter, and such a daughter as Adelaide !

DOCTOR Pilkington entered the room at the moment Lady Gertrude fainted away, and in this state of comparatively happy oblivion he caused her to be conveyed to her chamber, and made no attempt to recover her out of the fit, till Mrs. Armatage informed him that her clothes were taken off, and that she was laid in her bed ; he then, together with the afflicted messenger whose baneful tidings had reduced her to her present condition, followed Mrs. Armatage into the chamber of his patient, whom, by proper applications, he soon brought back to life, and to wretchedness.

ALL that human skill could do, and all that human philosophy could urge, was done and said, to so much effect that, in the space of a few hours, Lady Gertrude, who was in every sense of the word a true Christian, and resigned to the dispensations of an over-ruling Providence, not partially but consistently resigned, gained strength of mind to ask for the particulars of her misfortune ; and bore the recital with a degree of pious fortitude which charmed and astonished the narrator.

WHILST

WHILST he was obeying her commands, which were not to be resisted, he seemed to struggle with sentiments more pungent than her own:—he often stopped, unable to proceed—his voice was tremulous, and his accents broken.—Lady Gertrude's face was turned away from him, and covered; he saw the linen that concealed it, wet with her tears; he heard her trying to stifle a tumult of sobs, which, dying away, vented themselves in soft sighs, such as infants breathe when their tender frames are harassed by fatigue, or their spirits irritated by disappointment.

C H A P. XVII.

Humanity a science—Two sorts of curiosity—Shifting scenes from the castle to the parsonage—Retrospection of passed events—A promenade—A dialogue—A stranger—Nobody knows who.

IN the relation Mr. Armatage made to Lady Gertrude Montreville of the dreadful calamity by which her repose had been pursued, overtaken, and destroyed, some circumstances were slightly touched upon, and many more were absolutely omitted—amongst the latter, he concealed that he had received intelligence of the body's arrival for interment the day following: he satisfied her that the beloved remains would be permitted to be brought over, but did not say when or by whom attended.—It was impossible to divest these particulars of their bitterness; but he endeavoured to soften them with all the skilfulness of an adept in the science of humanity.

THERE is not a more innocent or praise-worthy sentiment of the mind, than that desire of information commonly called Curiosity, if bounded by certain restrictions; nor one more basely degrading, when it is used, as is too often the case, as an engine of practical deceit. Of the first class I am persuaded are my
 readers

readers, who wish to share with me the full confidence of Mr. Armatage, for no other reason than that, like me, they also may lament afresh over the calamitous detail of a catastrophe, so fatal to those for whose happiness or misery I can have no doubt they are warmly interested, and zealous to know every thing that concerns them.

To gratify this laudable inclination I have supposed you to entertain, let us, for a short time, leave the chamber of mourning, with good Mrs. Armatage to take charge of the heart-broken parent, and retrace the steps these affectionate friends had forced themselves to pursue, on an errand they would have laid down their lives not to have executed; and by this manœuvre we shall find we are at the parsonage instead of the castle, where I shall disclose what passed at the former, preceding their walk to the latter: and as your feelings cannot be quite so acute as the feelings of a mother, I shall have none of these delicate reserves, in order to spare your susceptibility, which were thought so necessary by the Man of God, when he adopted the very quintessence of caution, to spare from further laceration, as much as it could be spared, the pierced and bleeding soul of Lady Gertrude; on the contrary I will make you as sad as I can, and when I have it in my power to make you smile, you shall smile again.

ABOUT an hour before Mr. Armatage transported himself into the presence of Miss Montreville's mother, he had invited his wife to stroll with him up
and

and down a very pleasant promenade : it was the nearest spot to their habitation, which had the exclusive privilege of refusing the noon-day beams of the sun, at such times as they were every where else scorching and intolerable. This enchanting umbrage was formed of antient, tall, chefnut trees, and almost completed a covered way from the castle to the parish church ; but as straight avenues are now quite out of fashion, I am not tempted to say so much of its beauty as of its utility.

How often, said Mr. Armatage, stopping about the mid-way, and observing a tree more remarkable for its circumference than the rest—how very often has my old friend, Sir Thomas, been tormented by fools, who have more money than either taste or judgment, to level this magnificent and useful plantation ; but, thank God ! he withstood all the ridicule of fashion, and I now think, my dear, we shall never live to behold our sheltering friends submitting to the stroke of the axe—Sir William inherits not only his father's good sense, but his father's steadiness.

Yes, he does, indeed, replied his wife ; and in the same degree as their daughter inherits the beauty, the discretion, the sweetness, and the virtues of her mother.

AGAIN they walked on, and now their conversation was wholly engrossed by anticipating what would be Lady Gertrude's felicity, and how largely they should be sharers in her happiness, when the flower of
of

of the castle, meaning Miss Montreville, should be replanted in her native soil. They counted up how long it was likely Sir William might remain in Paris; and Mr. Armatage said, he believed it would be only a few days, having always found him ready to sacrifice his own, to the gratification of his mother. The next longed to know, if the charming Adelaide was much grown; yet allowed it would be superfluous to wish her changed in any respect from what she was when she left the neighbourhood—they hoped at least that her manners had undergone no revolution, and wished her to return possessed of no other graces but those she carried with her—When nature, observed the divine, has written the most curious of her works, it is soon demolished by affectation, if she is suffered to approach it; I should have fears for any other young woman in her situation, but I have none for Miss Montreville.

No! it is impossible, cried Mrs. Armatage, with unusual vivacity, that Adelaide ever can be spoiled; and I would venture my life against this nut (stooping and taking up one which had fallen, half-ripe, to the ground), that when we see her come back to her own quiet shades, she will be as much, or more, in love with them, than before they were quitted for the noisy, bustling pleasures of a gay, dissipated world! To which opinion her serious companion readily agreed; only observing, with a smile, that they must not sanguinely expect to keep such a treasure in their own possession, as, no doubt, when she was married, her husband would not be always a fixture in their neighbourhood.

BUT why, replied she, is it necessary for us to consider the time which is yet so distant ? or, if you will measure by the rule of philosophy, and tell me that two years are but as two moments, you must also allow, that there is the more reason why we should press into them as many pleasant events as we can, and throw as few rubs as may be in the way of our enjoyments—Oh ! added she, you cannot think how light my heart has felt, ever since Sir William went from hence to escort home his lovely sister.

I WONDER, Harriet, thinking so differently, said he, as we do, on light subjects, though in essential ones drawing much nearer, you so volatile, I so circumspect—how we came to put our horses together ; and, after we had submitted to the yoke, it appears still stranger that we should have supported it so pleasantly !

It is, returned she laughing, because you know I always accommodate my humour and my sentiments to yours, when I find out where I have been the dissenter.

No, said he in a tone of equal raillery, that is not exactly the case ; for I never could get you to acknowledge, that Miss Davenport is as handsome as Miss Montreville.

I THINK her beautiful, very beautiful ; but not so beautiful as Adelaide.

THEY

THEY had now reached the extremity of the avenue, and were turned about, facing their own comfortable habitation, when, after this manner, with her arm drawn through that of her husband, Mrs. Armitage thus continued to support her favourite opinion.

I CANNOT allow you to be so good a judge of beauty as you certainly are of merit; or you would not prefer Emeline's languishing, sweet, blue eyes, and flaxen hair, to the foul-speaking hazel ones, and the auburn tresses, of Adelaide. She was going on with the description, but stood self-interrupted, having observed a man galloping up to their house with that sort of speed to which is annexed the idea of important business. She pointed him out to Mr. Armatage, and they both stood still to observe his motions.

SURELY, cried she, he flies upon the wings of the winds!—I hope he brings us good tidings—though I think I have heard you say, bad news travel much faster than good.

YOU are right enough, said he; every body likes to stop Dame Fortune in her rapid course, because they have a pleasure in detaining her from visiting others, though she is not disposed to be useful to themselves; it is the way of the world; why it should be so I cannot tell you—and, by the same unaccountable rule, if Misfortune happens to pass by the same doors, where all kinds of traps have been spread to retard the speed of her mother, she will be
fresh

fresh mounted at every one of them, that no time might be lost in reaching the end of her journey.

BUT why, asked she, her eyes still fixed on the man, who was now within ten yards of the parsonage, why do you call Fortune the mother of Misfortune ?

BECAUSE, he replied, prosperity is the parent of a thousand vices, and of course of a thousand evils.

HE is actually alighting ! she exclaimed ; let us walk on and meet him : I am sickening with impatience to know what he can want.

A PARISHIONER, perhaps, who may have occasion for my attendance, he replied : and from the moment he had conceived that rational idea, they increased their speed, that he might be the sooner ready to perform what is certainly not the least essential part of the holy function, that of strewing the roses of peace on the pillow of repentance.

THEY were now arrived at a point of view from which they could clearly discern the movements of the stranger ; who having with an air of haste and bustle dismounted, and fastened his horse by the bridle to a gate, walked up to the door of the house, and knocked furiously with the end of his whip : a footman appeared—he spoke to him a moment—who seemed to direct him where he might speak to his master :—he advanced directly towards them with a very quick step.

C H A P.

C H A P. XVII.

The salutation—Question and answer—Hopes cherished—Hopes defeated—The conference continued—Alarms created—Certainty established—The effects of surprise—A fainting fit—A recovery—A renewal of conversation—A novel begun—and an observation deferred.

BOOTED and spurred, with a shuffling gait, a glove in one hand, his whip in the other, the stranger approached—Mr. Armatage touched his hat—the man pulled his off, but instantly put it on again, as if he thought it would be too great a condescension to stand before a country parson uncovered; and perhaps, if he had not been answered at the door by a footman in livery, he might not have taken it off at all.

WHEN asked what was the business that brought him thither; he replied, his lady had sent him on before to the clergyman of the parish, who he understood was the same person to whom he was speaking.

HERE

HERE Mrs. Armatage would have interrupted him, but he would not be interrupted—she certainly had strange and pleasant hopes come into her head, which flushed her cheeks with the most lively expression of animated expectation ; but whatever they were, they all vanished when the stranger continued to say, that his lady desired every thing might be got in readiness by four o'clock on the day following, as he might expect the body would be at the church by that hour.

THE good man fixed his eyes on the speaker with a look of no little surprise—You have certainly made some mistake, friend, said he—I have heard of no death—I have been informed of no funeral—I find you are unacquainted with this part of the world, and should have carried your directions to some other place, and have delivered them to some other person—I shall be glad if I can put you right.

I am right enough already, Sir, retorted the coxcomb, if this is the parish of Worthenton, and you are the parson.

ASSUREDLY I am, and this is also the parish of Worthenton—but what then—what am I to understand ?—Be so good as to explain yourself—who is your lady—and what body is it that she intends to bring here for interment ?

THE messenger started back several paces, cracked his whip with a motion of vexation rather than insolence,

insolence, and cried out in great confusion, God so! there must indeed, Sir, be some mistake, as you say—but neither I nor my lady are to blame—I'll be sworn, her ladyship's woman, Mrs. Davis, did write, and that I put her letter into the post-office with my own hands.

THESE alarming words, rendered infinitely more alarming by the name of Davis, who was well known to them as the personal servant of Mrs. Johnson, and the only female one they had taken with them abroad, found their way to the hearts of the apprehensive divine, and his still more apprehensive, terrified wife.—She caught hold of the arm which she had before quitted, and with a face paler than ashes, exclaimed to the man, who seemed to partake of the general amazement—Speak plainer, whilst I have life to hear you! who is your lady—who is Mrs Davis—to whom was the letter directed?

THE name of Johnson, pronounced with hesitation and trembling, suspended the faculties of the enquirer, and she sunk down on the grass, faintly calling on the name of Lady Gertrude!—It was near a quarter of an hour before either of them were enough recovered or collected to enter further into the examination of particulars.—Their senses affirmed, that death had overtaken one of the party—and sympathy told them, that the blow had fallen upon Adelaide.

DURING the time Mrs. Armatage continued sinking under the influence of a shock she was not armed to resist, the unlucky messenger ran to the house for assistance;

assistance; and, before the servants came out with water, drops, and other restoratives, her affectionate husband had placed himself by her on the ground, tenderly supported her head on his aching bosom, and saw, with as much pleasure as he was then capable of feeling, her eyes open, and tears rush from them in abundance: when his people appeared, he waved his hand, they understood his motion, and leaving the water within his reach, went back to the house.

HAVING administered the wholesome cordial, and seen that she was composed enough to hear and adopt his arguments, he reasoned with her as a husband whose own existence depended upon her preservation; as a divine, whose office it was to teach the lesson of submission; and as a charitable christian, who wished her to call home her scattered spirits, that she might be able to command them on the forlorn, in hope of reinforcing the strength of that poor sufferer who would feel the weight of a blow so unexpected, much, very much more severely than it had fallen on them! She listened—she promised—and she performed; which will not be doubted by such as recollect that she was soon after administering to the assistance of Lady Gertrude, stifling her own regrets in the sorrows of that agonized parent.

SEEING her restored to a tolerable degree of composure, he led her into the house, and would have had her retire whilst he further questioned the bearer of Mrs. Johnson's message; but she refused to
absent

absent herself during the examination : I know, said she, it will be excruciating ! I know it will harrow up my soul !—but if I do not harden myself to the task, how shall I ever be able to stand in the presence of the dear miserable !—A fresh gust of grief came to her relief—she desired the man might be called in ; but not being able to bear the sight of one who had overwhelmed them all in so much affliction, she sat down in one corner of the room, and assuring her husband she would govern, though she might not be able entirely to vanquish, her emotions, pressed his hand, as if to thank him for the sad indulgence she had wrung from him, covered her face with a handkerchief, and remained silent.

It was Mrs. Johnson's maitre-d'hotel, for so he called himself, who came on this pestilential errand : a native of Britain, and hired by her in France, where he lost his master with whom he had travelled : he was received into her service only one day before that great lady set out to convey the corps of Miss Montreville back to that once happy, now desolated spot, from whence she had seduced her.

THERE was no more appearance of timidity, of respect to superiors, or any particular traits of humanity, in this man, above what is generally to be found in most other upper servants of his description ; yet he seemed penetrated by the effects his message had produced ; and when summoned to shew himself again before the person whom, in consideration of his function, he did not think it necessary at first to treat

with too much ceremony, he came into his presence much confused and humbled—he gave the account of himself which I have given to the reader, with these additions, that hearing Mrs. Johnson wanted a servant, in the room of one who had left her to follow another family, for the sake of travelling farther into foreign parts ; and being also told by one of his own countrymen that it was a very good place, he went immediately to seek after it, but saw only the lady's woman, Mrs. Davis, who informed him she would speak for him to her mistress, as soon as she could be spoken to ; but that at present she saw nobody, taking on so prodigiously for the death of a young lady who she had brought with her to France, that she seemed more desirous to go after her to heaven, than stay where she was—It is by the good offices, he added, of Mrs. Davis, that I succeeded to the vacant place, and the first time I saw her, she asked me to put a letter in the post-house : Take great care of it, said she, or I do not know what will become of us all, for it is a long epistle that I have been writing about Miss Montreville's death, and directions for the funeral, to her brother, who my lady expects daily, but hopes he will get it in time to prevent his coming.—I did as she desired ; and, as you know nothing of the matter, Sir, I cannot think what is become of the letter !

HAVE you never heard, asked Mr. Armatage, by what disorder Miss Montreville was cut off ?

OH yes ! cried he, having by this time conquered the sentiment of concern that kept down some part of his
his

his natural assurance, I have heard as much perhaps as if I had lived in the family ten years; Mrs. Davis is a mighty communicative, worthy woman, and has told me every thing.

THEN, I pray you, tell me all you do know; returned his interrogator.

THAT I shall readily do, Sir, said the man of rising courage and growing importance, and I give you my honour, as Mrs. Davis told it to me, it is quite a little novel—Mr. Armatage at that moment could have caned him, but wanting to gain information he put on the armour of patience, which at once made him impervious to the shafts of ignorance, and incapable of wrath.

THE *maitre-d'hotel* finding he had leave to talk as much as he pleased, and having, no doubt, a predilection for entering on a subject where he could often introduce his very great favourite, Mrs. Davis, entered on his little novel in the following words.

Mrs. Davis has often told me, Sir, that the young lady, whose body is now within thirty miles of this very spot, and will be nearer before they put up for the night, was as handsome a lady, and as good a lady as ever drew breath.

Mr. Armatage groaned—his wife sighed—but neither of them spoke.

Mrs.

Mrs. Davis says, Miss Montreville might have been married to the best gentlemen in France, when first she was seen in that country; but that soon after, she lost a great deal of her beauty: for you know, Sir, as Mrs. Davis observes——Mrs. Davis's observation, if worth any thing, is too good for the end of a chapter.

C H A P. XVIII.

Mrs. Davis's observation brought forward, and affords a wholesome lesson to young ladies—A great deal of communication, out of which very little is to be made—The wit of a maitre-d'hotel, and the policy of a waitingmaid—The parish priest in his own carriage.

AS Mrs. Davis observes, said the narrator of his own little novel, when young ladies will not eat—cannot sleep—do nothing but vex, fret, and weep, day and night—the roses will fade—yes, Sir, the roses will fade, as Mrs. Davis observes; and when young ladies are no longer handsome, they are no longer admired.

WILL you be so good, my friend, to come to the point, said Mr. Armatage, and tell me what occasioned this change in the disposition and person of Miss Montreville, exactly as you heard them accounted for by Mrs. Davis.

TRUE, Sir, very true; I should have mentioned that circumstance first—Has not the young lady lost her father lately?

Yes;

YES; but it is three months since Sir Thomas Montreville died.

No matter for that, Sir; Mrs. Davis assures me, Miss never held up her head, as one may say, after that time, infomuch that my lady and her daughters wore themselves to skeletons, in going about trying to divert her; but she always said she should soon follow the old gentleman, and nothing they could say or do would please her.

HERE Mrs. Armatage, dropping the handkerchief from her face, and starting on her feet, exclaimed—Impossible——Impossible! Never was such another amiable temper as Miss Montreville's! It could never have altered so strangely—She had no pleasure but in pleasing others!—Oh, that she had never left the wing of her fond mother!—She clasped her hands together and wrung them in agony.

HER husband, who seemed to fear these un governable transports might throw a restraint on the communicative messenger, whom, for certain reasons, he rather wished to encourage, begged she would moderate her feelings, and consider how much they were obliged to the person who was so willing to give them all the information he was able, of the beginning and progress of that disorder, the event of which had been fatal to numbers as well as themselves; it being impossible to know Miss Montreville and not to lament her.

EXACTLY! the very words, Sir, that Mrs. Davis has often said to me—But had I not better stop, Sir; the

the lady seems much disturbed—I have been a married man myself, and know that all ladies are vastly nervous.

By no means! by no means! my wife will soon get better. She had already taken the hint her good man intended, and was returned to her former station.

WELL, Sir, Mrs. Davis has assured me often upon her honour, that she did not know which would die first, her lady, or Miss; for, when she grew very sick, and the doctors said she was going into a galloping consumption, Mrs. Davis could hardly keep life in my lady; and often have I myself, since I attended her ladyship on the journey, when standing behind her chair, heard her say to Mrs. Davis—Remember what I tell you, Davis, I shall not long survive my dear cousin.

DID Miss Montreville die in Paris, or where did she die?

O Lord! Sir, not at Paris; it is the worst place in the world for sick folks. The doctors sent her away from thence eight days before—Mrs. Davis did tell me, but I protest I have forgot where.—The body was brought back to the capital, and my lady had it lie in state five days, as if Miss had been a princess, till her ladyship had got permission to move it to the castle—the young lady's last words being a desire that her coffin might be laid by the side of her father's: this leave was obtained with much difficulty; but there

there is nobody who does business like my lady ;— and then for a funeral ! I believe you will say, Sir, when it comes here, that you never saw a prettier one in your life ; my lady ordered it all herself, every bit of it.—The best undertaker in town met us at Dover an hour after we landed.—The family went on to London, and my lady with Mrs. Davis, as chief mourners, follows the herse in a black coach, drawn by six of as fine horses as any in England—mutes—feathers—every thing tasty and in the highest style—quite the tippi, Sir ; just as you would wish it put out of hand.

Mr. Armatage, who, if he did not listen to this fantastical detail and more bombastical description with patience, contrived as well as he could to curb his impatience, now asked, How it could have happened that Miss Montreville's family had never been apprized of her illness ? and if Mrs. Davis had ever let him into their motives for a silence so unaccountable ?

THAT question I can answer with the greatest ease and pleasure, said the important retailer of Mrs. Davis's declarations and opinions ; by the greatest good fortune, tête-à-tête one day with Mrs. Davis, finding myself somehow at a loss for something to say, I was wondering how it happened that none of Miss's relations had come over to take care of her when she was sick.—Lord ! Mr. Marlow, said Mrs. Davis, how you talk as if she wanted any body's care but my lady's.—I am sure she could not have been better waited on if she had been a queen.—I have

have no doubt of it, Ma'am, said I, but the thing is natural, that one should wish to see the very last of one's relations, when they are well in the world, and do not want to drag the last shilling out of our scanty purse to pay the piper ; so as Miss was rich, and her friends the same, every thing should have been done in stile. Why, Sir, said she, they could not have come if they would, for Miss Montreville determined not to fret her mama and her brother by telling them she was ill.

UNFORTUNATE tenderness ! muttered Mr. Armatage.

AND Miss also made my lady and my young ladies as good as take their bible oath, said Mrs. Davis, not to write about it ; so that her brother, her mother, or her sweetheart, could know nothing of the matter. What ! said I, Ma'am, Miss had a sweetheart then in her own country ?—You will excuse me, Sir, for being a little funny with Mrs. Davis ; but where one has an opportunity to be smart, hit or miss, out it comes.—O ! my dear Ma'am, says I, if there is a sweetheart in the case I know where the shoe will pinch most : and then I wondered, as I told her, why she had not informed the young gentleman unknowing to any body ; observing it must have been a fine feather in her cap ; for, says I, if the gentleman was any thing like a gentleman, he would no doubt have come down handsomely for such good intelligence.—I might have done as you advise, Mr. Marlow ; but my lady would have sent me about my business, or any servant in the house, who should

should dare to have vexed her dear cousin, by spreading abroad what Miss Montreville would keep to herself; and you know, Mr. Marlow, said she, a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

HERE Mr. Armatage, being informed that the clerk whom he had sent for to receive orders was come, felt that he should be no loser by getting rid of his prating intelligencer, from whom he could expect nothing more, and from whom he had not gained much; he therefore civilly sent him to the kitchen, and said he would see him again on his return from the castle.—The person who was to take directions came into the room, and in the midst of receiving them, Marlow stepped back with a pocket-book open in his hand, and hastily taking a paper out of it begged pardon for not having remembered to deliver it before. He said it came from his lady, who had given him many charges to take care of it.

Mr. Armatage, being very busy in explaining himself to the parish-clerk, put the paper into his pocket without looking at it, and, in a fit of absence, occasioned more by the shock his mind had sustained than by any constitutional defect, thought of it no more for many hours after it was in his possession; his wife was not present at this transaction, so could not put him in mind of it—She had gone out the moment before, to abate the redness of her eyes by washing them with cold water, and to strengthen her resolution by reasoning on the necessity of her not appearing to Lady Gertrude with the appendages of woe in her countenance, till the occasion of that woe had

had been fully accounted for—But this difficult task was not half accomplished when she was called upon by her good man to accompany him on the dismal errand. He had ordered their carriage to be got ready, sensible that her trembling limbs would never support her to the castle—it was now at the door they stepped into it, and she took with her every thing that could be useful on the first alarm, before the servants might be able to procure such restoratives as she knew would be wanting.

THE drive was a short one, but lengthened a little by their going out of the direct road to call on the physician, to tell him the dreadful blow that had fallen on the Montreville family, and to request his immediate attendance—He was not at home, but every moment expected to return. A note, which, in that case, had been prepared for him, was left with his servant; and they were hardly out of sight, when he opened it, and became almost as great a victim to surprise and sorrow as themselves.

If you want to know what sort of a carriage was kept by my friends at the parsonage, I shall tell you, without boasting, that it was more suited to their convenience than to their pretensions; it was a neat plain post-chaise, without any ornament whatever, except those very respectable arms their birth entitled them to quarter. His amiable Harriet had brought him ten thousand pounds: his living was eight hundred a year, and his personal estate between eleven and twelve hundred.—They grudged nothing to comfort, nor lavished any thing on shew; but I suppose

pose you will say they must be squanders, when I tell you they did not lay up one shilling of their income, though they had no children to divide it with them.—I do not deny that they made several valuable purchases—but their title-deeds are not to be found in any earthly records; yet I know they were securely registered in heaven.

C H A P.

C H A P. XIX.

*A short prayer—A short contest—A short compromise—
A short comment—No tautology—An action in itself
dishonourable, by circumstances rendered honourable—
An Abigail's epistle—Hypocrisy unmasked—The
minister of patience out of patience—A soliloquy*

GOD'S will be done ! cried the pious priest, breaking silence as they came within sight of the castle ; for neither of them had trusted to the strength of their own voice during their little drive—God's will be done ! and may he give me strength to perform the mission to which I am appointed !

I CANNOT, indeed I cannot go in with you, said Mrs. Armitage, her lips quivering, and forcing her tears to retreat back, which had furiously rushed into her eyes at the sight of the turret-window, where she had so often beheld Miss Montreville expressing her pleasure by smiles and nods, when they were expected, and as she stood there watching their approach.

I WILL

I WILT not ask you, my love, said her tender husband, to exert yourself beyond what you think you are able to bear. Let me go out here, and I will order the servants to convey you home.

O NO ! she replied, it is not that I want to spare myself ; I am afraid of nothing but seeing Lady Gertrude before you have broke the dreadful charm of happiness by which she is at this very moment fascinated.

WELL then, said he, follow me to the door of the dressing-room ; wait there a few minutes, and when your assistance is necessary I will call upon you to exert your resolution.

WITH all my heart, returned she, much revived by this short respite. If I do not see the stroke given, I shall not feel it half so severely. In one case I may be useful, in the other a poor miserable incumbrance, who, instead of bestowing aid, shall probably stand in need of receiving it.

IN the mean time, I will, returned her husband, leave my beloved Harriet this consideration, on which she may ruminate, and turn it to advantage in the future arrangement of her thoughts—The flower that is cut down is fully ripe for its removal to the garden of Paradise.

SHE could make him no answer—the carriage stopped—he lifted her out—they went into the house together

together, their steps tottering, and their hearts failing.

THE dreaded interview being already over, "and nought so tedious as a twice-told tale," far from me to tire you with repetitions. You have heard with what tender caution Mr. Armatage broke the melancholy tidings.—You have seen how Lady Gertrude supported them:—so let us leave her, under the soothing care of his excellent wife, who, for the first forty-eight hours, did not forsake the pillow of her afflicted friend, and follow him back to the room, where he had executed the arduous commission imposed on him by friendship, by humanity, and by the duties of his holy function.

You will recollect, my readers, that I spoke to you of a letter which had fallen into the hands of Lady Gertrude, directed to Sir William Montreville; and you may also remember Mrs. Johnson's messenger having said, that he had, with his own hands, put one into the post-office from Mrs. Davis, to acquaint that gentleman with the death of his sister: this assertion had occupied as much of Mr. Armatage's thoughts, even in the presence of Lady Gertrude, as could be spared from her distress, and his own peculiar hard task in making her behold it. His eyes had glanced to the place where she had, just before he came in, deposited the collection of that day's post; and he had said to himself—Surely I shall find it there—and now came back to examine if any such letter was amongst them as might be supposed to come from Mrs. Davis.

THAT

THAT which bore the foreign post-mark, and was imagined by the self-deceived mother to contain solicitations from some needy petitioner, was the very one he fixed upon as most likely to be the production of a waiting-gentlewoman. He had made many reflections on the method taken by Mrs. Johnson to communicate an event so fatal, as well as on her silence respecting the illness of Miss Montreville: but these reflections being of no importance to the history, I pass them over.

HAVING dropped the suspected letter into the very same pocket with the paper delivered to him by the maitre-d'hotel, he walked quietly back to the parsonage, and produced it for the inspection of that important personage, before he would venture to break the seal; who, by assuring him it was the same, removed all those delicate scruples that had retarded his immediate enquiries, and he retired into his closet to give its contents an uninterrupted perusal.

THOUGH this letter was not directed to himself, but addressed to another, he opened it with as clear a conscience as he ever performed any other good action of his life; and if you are content to partake the treasures of eloquence so come at, I bid you welcome to the entertainment, though it will cost you some labour to find out of what it is composed.

BILLET

BILLET thus superscribed :

*Toe sur wilum monthervile att they chasthell
inn they parish off wothingtonge hengland*

Sur wilum monthervile

I writs bye horder off mi god laddye madham
iohnson toe hacquaint youre onhour off they fade
deeth thate hav appenhead inn hour oufe and mad
ous ale a poore pitifool substracted familey halas mi
god sur they poore der yong laddey youre sesster
hav tacken her flit hopwords an mi tinder arted
laddyes hav bin inn hardde fits hever cince mis
monthervile departhead hout off thise heir lif
poore der sels the tack hon seo butterley the cante
iff youre onour wood giv they whorld spake a
cincible whord yet throw mis hav bin ded thre
hole dais an a bite and yet mi poore der laddyes
ar know bitterer fore they long tim thate hav re-
lapsed cince hour butter mis fortin mi god laddey
hops youre onhour whill knot make youre selph
unheasy has shee hav gotte lese too bringe mis
hoom to they chasthell too bee berried inn youre
fammiley fault has wase mises own riquiste mi
mister an mi laddey an mi yong laddys percent
thaer best means an hop too fine ale in radiness
fore mis too bee putt has nare hur pappas sid has
is covenant bye tim wee cums too curch witch
whill bee inn a fortnit moore or les iff thyngs gooze
hon so feverable has they dose hat prhesent written
fore the hembasendoor hav promased thate mises
chorpe shal bee hindoulged in a tower too hir der
Vol. I. H contry

contryware shee mitily welfshed fore too goo aftere
 shee ware departhead hout off theise heir lif the
 fever beeinge hardde too hobtain mi laddey hops
 youre onhor whill giv youre passon horders to ho-
 pen youre faults bye tim wee cums an i hopes his
 riverence whill gire ous a furmount hon they
 occhasion i bags youre onhor too pardin mi bolde-
 nefs an they passon too throw i am but a servent i
 wisshes too bee refoormed an howe cann wee
 liffing sols bee butter reformed thane bye earing
 whate his fead too they ded which mi umbel duti
 too youre onhor i ham fore mi laddey an felph i
 ham fur wilum montherviles

moust hobighent an

greate foole umbel

servent till deeth

margaret daves.

phost creep

mi laddey seas i moust sea shee shal cum an slip a
 knit att they chasthell with chorpes.

THE reverend Mr. Armatage went through this
 curious epistle, as may be supposed, very slowly ;
 he at first to dive for the characters, next for their
 expression, and afer all for a purpose to which he
 might apply them in defiance of common grammar
 and common sense :—he then thought of the billet
 put into his hands by Marlow, and drew it from
 his pocket, neither did he look at the superscription,
 being told it was for him, and came from Mrs.
 Johnson ; but severed the seal with little ceremony,
 and less good humour ; the *phost-creep* of the letter
 he had just finished, hinting at a visit from Mrs.
 Johnson,

Johnson, filling him with no pleasant ideas; but all his other emotions gave way to that of surprise, when, looking on the hand, he saw it was the same with what he had been trying to decypher; and, examining more minutely, found it was directed to a female friend of Mrs. Margaret Davis, and by no means calculated for his inspection, as you will confess, when I treat you with the sight of it.

BILLET thus superscribed:

To madamossella gackline

Der mem

Mi lady hav knot hard frome youe a longh tim wee hops you are stile att they chasthell mi laddey seas youe moust writ a woord too sea howe mifes deeth his tacken bye they owld ladey an fur wilum an whote sarte off welchome wee ar lick to hav mi laddey an i suphoses wee shal bee blacke sheip with hir laddeysheep wee arr inn fin sperrets for ale thate mis lies cloafs enuff mi yong mister whill hav his desserts an wee shal ale be has mery has grigefs too morrow wen know bodi se ous an yit wee moust purtend too bee has sory has they befst off theme i cane writ know moore mister malow hour new maiter hothell wates fore mi epestel an youe moust no der mem mister malow his fouch a fwett fellor thate shud hee ax mee fore mi selph instid off mi epestel i would not lit hime weight a momeant so know more att present mi der mem frome youre loafing frind tile deeth

margaret davis

WHAT-

WHATEVER was felt and stifled on reading the first of this lady's productions, it was but a feeble expression of that sentiment by which he was agitated on perusing the second: he stamped his foot against the floor, and exclaimed, perhaps with more than episcopal fervour—Base hypocrite!—savage unnatural monster!—thou hast worried the lamb to death; thou hast scattered the flock, and yet, not contented, thou wouldest come to feed upon their forsaken pasture—Never shall the castle open its gates to receive the destroyer of its peace—in the absence of Sir William, I! yes, I will be the guardian of his martyred mother!

C H A P. XX.

The maitre d'hotel suddenly dismissed with only half a message—Montreville arms—Great preparations for a great lady—Origin of the Montreville arms—A little of the hostess, but not so much as will be said of her hereafter, and the reason why she is mentioned at all in this part of the history.

I ~~concluded~~ my last chapter with the manly and pious resolution of Mr. Armatage not to admit Mrs. Johnson within the castle walls, that the sacred sorrows of Lady Gertrude might not be profaned by mingling with those of a hypocrite: he next determined to keep both these genuine specimens of deceit for the inspection of Sir William Montreville, and to say nothing of the mistake by which he came possessed of the last billet, unless found out by the person who had made it; which did not happen till a long time after he was gone from the parsonage; and then, without saying he had committed a blunder, he got himself off with the ladies by pretending to have lost his pocket-book, which must have been stole from him, he said,

said, at a dirty ale-house, where he had stopped to refresh himself, and observed, he never saw so many ill-looking travellers as got about him whilst he stood at the door :—the lie passed, his negligence was reprehended, and no more was said about it—But to return where I left off.

ON the messenger appearing to receive the latest commands of Mr. Armstange, he was directed to signify to his employer that she could neither be lodged nor received at the castle ; advising him to go to the Montreville Arms, a house of public entertainment in the village, and there order what accommodations he thought proper for the reception of his mistress : Tell her, said he, that her appearance at the castle would not fail of being destructive to Lady Gertrude, whose life already hangs on so slender a thread, that the least exertion must cut it asunder :—tell her—he could say no more—big drops rolled down his face, and he turned hastily away to hide them, waving his hand, as much as to say, Go—you have got your message.

Do you wish to know what he would further have said, if his passions had consented to the efforts he had made :—Tell her—he wanted to add—that the miserable mother of Miss Montreville was kept in ignorance of the day when the remains of her daughter would be brought thither for interment—that all caution would be observed to prevent the intelligence from reaching her—that not a bell should announce the arrival, whose sound might penetrate the awful recess where her griefs were sheltered.

SUCH

SUCH was the message Mr. Armatage certainly intended to send, could he have delivered with it his usual steadiness; but, wanting that fortitude which seldom deserted him, the man went off with as much of his intentions as he could articulate; the rest he carried with him into his closet, and bruded over them with all the luxury of sadness. —One of his purposes I must not omit to tell you: —it was to meet the dear remains as soon as they entered the village, to prevent any tumults that might arise, were they to rest but one hour in the view of a grateful multitude, attached to Miss Montreville by every tie that could endear splendour to poverty.

I AM always sorry to leave good people, and Mr. Armatage was a good man in every sense of the word; and what grieves me more than all the rest is, that I must not only leave him alone, but the prey of melancholy, to tell you that the *maitre d'hotel* turned back to the town where he knew his lady intended to repose that night: he was sorry to carry such tidings, as he guessed beforehand would not be very acceptable, having supposed his lady much more sanguine than she happened to be in her expectations of at least a civil reception at the castle; but no sooner did he understand from the mistress of the Montreville Arms that, though she had changed her name and situation, Madam Johnson would rejoice to see her, than he dismissed much of his discontent at the thoughts of what would be her disappointment when told there was no admittance for her.

under the same roof with Lady Gertrude—he immediately settled that his mistress should dine with Mrs. Vernon the day following, and bespoke such a profusion of good things, as would, he hoped, knowing his lady liked good things, reconcile her to the mortifying consequence of his interview with Mr. Armatage.

THE Montreville Arms is a very respectable looking inn, situated about a mile from the castle, but not more than half as far from the parish church. It was built by Sir Thomas for the convenience of accommodating such strangers as came to see his beautiful water-falls—his fine paintings, and plantations—of all which he was not a little vain; and would have held any man in sovereign contempt (as far as related to the article of taste) if he would not have ridden a hundred miles, without a saddle, to behold and do homage to the wonders that he—nature—and the first artists in the world, had created and arranged between them.

BESIDES this, Sir Thomas had another, and full as laudable motive for building a house of entertainment so near his own: in consulting what would please himself he did not forget the gratification of his neighbours and tenants, who found it a great solace to be supplied from this inn with horses or a chaise whenever their necessities required such sort of indulgences.

Mrs. Vernon was the identical young woman whom her patroness, Mrs. Johnson, had placed near

near the person of her grandmother, in the triple capacity of spy, informer, and chief attendant : at the death of Mrs. Osmond, she found her services rewarded by the very handsome legacy of one thousand pounds ; whether by her own, or by the bequest of her mistress, has never yet been lawfully ascertained, because never disputed : though there is all the reason in the world to suppose that she was under no obligation for this encrease of fortune to any body but herself : some how or other, this legacy was supposed to have been edged in amongst the few instructions set down in her own hand by the old lady's verbal directions, it being the only small gift by which her will was distinguished.

ANOTHER piece of good-luck happened to this favourite of fortune about the same time—the Montreville Arms, so celebrated for its conveniences and desirable situation, being untenanted, she proposed herself to Sir Thomas, and was accepted : she then announced her being the wife of Mr. Vernon, to whom she had been privately married some months before ; and Mr. Vernon, though in the service of a noble peer, soon joined his amiable spouse at the Montreville Arms inn, tavern, and hotel, to assist her in doing the honours of the bar.

I MENTION this short sketch of Mrs. Vernon's domestic arrangements as a hint to my readers, by which they may know that whenever Mrs. Johnson arrives at the Montreville Arms, she will meet with an old friend in a new landlady.

C H A P. XXI.

Heterogeneous description and no description.

MRS. Johnson's maitre-d'hotel went, as I said he would do, to the place where his mistress was to sleep, but did not see her that night, because she was gone to bed before he got there—neither could he speak to Mrs. Davis, because Mrs. Davis having very lady-like, that is to say very tender, spirits, especially when travelling with a corpse, had told her mistress that she would almost as soon keep company with a ghost as with a coffin, it put her so much in mind of the other world ! and her mistress, who was ever indulgent to this flower of all waiting maids, had not only sympathized in her terrors, but permitted her to occupy as large a share of her own bed as she could spare to any body, which was by no means an equal division. However, as one was all flesh, and the other all bone, they did pretty well together ; the lady was pleased to have a nocturnal companion on so dismal a journey, and Mrs. Margaret Davis, where
could

could Mrs. Margaret Davis be half so secure from the fears of coffins and hobgoblins as in the presence, even reposing by the very side of her innocent lady, with a candle burning in the chimney, and the curtains all drawn close round them ! As I never have desired that evil should fall on the heads of those who have wofully deserved it, why should I not wish Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Margaret a good night ? they might have disturbed the happiness of others, mine they have never molested : good night, then, and if you have ever been wicked, may you also be penitent ; it is the very worst wish that I have for the very worst of my enemies.

The next morning as soon as Mrs. Johnson had forcibly opened her sealed-down eyes, she enquired if her servant was come back whom she had sent the day before to the parson of Worthenton parish ; and being answered in the affirmative, commanded his immediate attendance.

SHE was sitting composedly at breakfast, attended only by her own simpering ready hand-maiden, Mrs. Margaret Davis, when the important valet made his appearance, in consequence of the summons he had received from his mistress ; by whom he was honoured with a very long audience, and to whom he very faithfully related the consequence of his journey to Worthenton, and delivered the message he brought from Mr. Armatage exactly enough, if he had not seasoned it with a little more acrimony than ever fell from the lips of that gentleman—perhaps he had the skill of looking
ing

ing into what passed in the heart of Lady Gertrude's friend, and might there read much more than the divine thought proper to express.

Mrs. Johnson with a dignity of soul which we are to suppose might have its foundation in self-applause, calmly listened to the rather-exaggerated account of her *maitre d'hotel's* interview with the parish priest, and his unaccountable impertinence in forbidding her approach to the castle. Good creature ! full of that sentiment commonly called the milk of human kindness, she only smiled at the errors of another less perfect than herself; and quietly observed that such sort of treatment from any of Lady Gertrude Montreville's creatures, was no more than she expected ; it was very natural, and even pardonable, that her ladyship should feel her own disappointment, and envy the good fortune of her family.

Mrs. Margaret Davis was not half so clear of gall as her gentle mistress, but taking up the argument where she let it down, *purported* young *mister* Johnson was worth a thousand of the folks at the castle ; that for her part she had all her life abominated *passons*, they carried on a mean piddling trade, in which there was so little employment, that for want of more to do, they were the most meddling, busy, fidgeting bodies in the *kerasion*—to which observation she added this happy climax, that she had rather live an old maid all the days of her life, than marry a *passon*.

Mrs.

MRS. Johnson reprimanded her a *little*—and to shew that she bore no ill-will to Mr. Armatage, for his spite against her, she checked Mrs. Margaret's freedom, by very good-naturedly taking the weaker side, and saying, there was no harm in being a parson, if they would keep themselves to themselves, and not trouble their heads about the consciencies of other people; then indeed she admitted they were officious and detestable.

THIS friendly altercation passed between the mistress and maid, after the man-servant was dismissed; but, before he left the room Mrs. Johnson had asked him a thousand little questions about her old favourite, Madame Vernon, of the Montreville Arms, seeming mightily pleased that she was to take up her residence there, rather than at the castle, where nothing but tears, moaning, and sour looks were to be expected: she knew how she should be looked upon, under that roof, but their hate was quite as welcome as their love: they had swindled her son once out of his estate, but blessed be Heaven they could not play their base tricks over again—to this ejaculation of pious gratitude, she meekly added, that if she happened to like the situation of the *hotel*, and could be accommodated with a decent apartment, she might, perhaps, in that case, stay there a few weeks, to recruit her poor shattered spirits, taking care, however, that her eyes should never be contaminated, as long as she staid in their odious neighbourhood, by the ostentatious inhabitants of the lordly mansion, or their servile, interfering dependents.

IF any apology is expected for, or reason why this placid lady should, all at once, lay aside her habitual composure, and descend to invectives, I can only make the one, or give the other, by observing, that though the habit of meekness seemed to fit her very well on the present occasion, it is possible that it may not belong to her, at least not adhere so much to her constitution, but that she could put it on and take it off at her own pleasure, as circumstances should make it commodious, or otherwise.

THE horse had set off from the Child and Eagle some hours before Mrs. Johnson ordered her own well-covered sable carriage to the door, and when she had stepped into it, followed by Mrs. Margaret Davis, she bid the postillions drive as fast as their horses could go, or that she should not be able to overtake the cavalcade before it had entered the village of Worthenton—I despise, cried she, the Montrevilles, and all that belong to them, but they shall never have it to alledge, that I have neglected my duty to a daughter of their house. Whilst delivering this stricture on the propriety of her own immaculate conduct, the grooms were mounted, the step was put up, the host had made one of his profoundest bows, wishing her ladyship a pleasant journey, the postillions had rested their toes in the stirrup, the command was given that they were to proceed by Mrs. Johnson herself—Go on, was announced in an audible tone of voice, and the mourning coach, with its merry contents, was out of sight in a moment.

How

How sublime and how beautiful are the poet's observations upon external appearances of grief, when he describes such sort of people as I have been describing, and tells us—

“ They bear about the mockery of woe.”

&c. &c.

Such were the woes of Mrs. Johnson, and so did she bear them about : but not of the same complexion were the woes of Lady Gertrude Montreville.

My gracious reader, am I expected to give you a very particular detail of a scene by which you and I may happen to be differently affected ?—You may shudder at the last entrance of the once-beloved Adelaide into her native village ; I might envy it, because it appears to have been the end of her troubles and the beginning of her happiness.

SHALL I rehearse the splendid pageantry that decked the vehicle in which her cold remains were conveyed to the burial place of her ancestors ? shall I bring before the sickening sight of your imagination, the velvet palls and virgin plumes that decorated the unconscious horses, as they proudly drew along the faded pride of mortal loveliness ? shall I tell you of the thousand tears of affection, veneration, and the most lively gratitude, that were shed over the lid of that coffin, which for ever shut up the adored object of as many hearts as there were spectators assembled to witness the
closing

closing scene. No, reader, no ! there is not one of you that can have the same cause to think so lightly of life as I do ; and it is for your sakes therefore, that I turn aside from such representations ; too much of the reality of sorrow is a tax I would not lay upon you ; I had rather spare you from pain than promote it ; but, the tears—the sobs—the groans—the wringing of hands—the hysterics—and the fainting fits of Mrs. Johnson—though extremely well acted—I would have ventured to describe them if they had not been very much beyond my small powers of description.

C H A P. XXII.

*The priest and the fine lady—Equality not necessary
to friendship, and other matters.*

MRS. Johnson was so much taken up with the part she had to act, or something else, that she had not condescended to bestow a word or look on the Man of God, from the time he joined the procession, when advanced within the precincts of his parish, to the end of that solemn service, the performance of which sorely grieved his heart, though the manner of performing it gave additional dignity to his sacred and holy function: nay, so deeply was he engaged on the duties of his office, that he did not endeavour to attract the artificial mourner's attention towards himself; and though he knew there were some valuable livings in the gift of her family, he did not send his eyes begging that way: once, indeed, he did turn them upon her, filled with meaning, and not by accident, it was in the most awful part of the service, that he desired she would moderate her violent expressions of grief or
he

he should not be able to proceed with satisfaction to himself, or benefit to his hearers.

THIS freedom was not so respectfully received as it deserved; and perceiving that neither his compassion nor approbation were interested in his request of moderation, so far from its taking effect, by producing a reform, the only return that she made to the sternness of his glance, or the severity of his reproach, was a scornful look of defiance, and a double portion of tumultuous and extravagant affliction.

THE solemn ceremony, notwithstanding the many interruptions she gave it, was at last got over, when the priest and the fine lady parted as they had met, in silence, and with the most sovereign contempt for each other. Mr. Armatage turned his face towards the castle, to look in upon the forrowing parent of Adelaide: Mrs. Johnson was conveyed, with two of the mutes who attended the funeral stuck up behind her carriage, to the Montreville arms, there to seek for comfort in the adulation of the rejoicing Mrs. Vernon.

It has been often observed, and generally allowed, that, though love is a leveller of all distinction, friendship has no such advantage, and that to be lasting, it must be built on the basis of equality.

It would be too presuming in a young writer, forced on the literary field of action, and very much against her inclinations making her awkward debut, to arraign the judgment of others, or endeavour to set aside opinions that have been long established; yet I hope it will be no very capital sin against humility, if I bring forward one example to prove, that in certain cases, equality is not necessary to friendship, if indeed there is any real meaning affixed to the word itself. Were I obliged to give a verdict on this question, very few instances, but those few doubly endeared to my grateful heart, could I produce, to confirm the substance of friendship, though a thousand are floating on my memory to ascertain the shadow of it.

I LOSE my subject in self, and it is the fault of recollection, that I do not tell my story better.

EQUALITY is not always the basis of friendship, or how should it happen to light up its flame in the bosoms of Mrs. Johnson, who was somebody, and Mrs. Vernon, who was nobody: Mrs. Johnson was a very great lady, Mrs. Vernon a very little gentlewoman, for gentlewomen she has chosen to be denominated ever since the death of Mrs. Osmond, and her own acquisition of fortune; to which title she had nearly the same pretensions as a highwayman has to call himself captain. Mrs. Johnson moreover, drove to the door of the Montreville arms in her own equipage, drawn by
six

six horses ; Mrs. Vernon had neither carriage nor horses, except for the use of other people who were willing to pay for the use of them : yet all this inequality of condition, which, on summing up the total, may be found between the great *lady* and the little *gentlewoman* was no bar to that sort of confidential intercourse, commonly called by the name of friendship. For the present I have said enough ; hereafter I may perhaps account more fully for that warmth of sympathetic kindness with which they felt the genuine virtues and good qualities of each other.

THE honourable Mrs. Johnson, delighted with the mistress and the situation of the Montreville arms, pronounced it the sweetest retreat in the world—enchantingly rural—so profoundly quiet, that her health and spirits, she said, were renovated by passing only one night in the dear comfortable habitation ; and so well she was convinced of the benefit already received, that the very next day she wrote to her eldest daughter, and in these words conveyed through her this message to her husband—“ Tell your father all the conveniencies by which I am surrounded ; bid him not be uneasy about me, or to trouble his head when I shall come back to town ; it is more than I know myself ; certainly I shall stay where I am a month, perhaps longer.”

I BELIEVE this is the first time I have had occasion to speak of Mrs. Johnson's husband, except when

when I told you that he went with his family to the continent; for I thought he seemed of as little importance to my history as he was to Mrs. Johnson herself: for this reason, I have not hitherto made him of any use, and perhaps in future, his name will seldom appear, even to swell the number of pages—no small consideration to the emolument of an author, who can then with much truth tell the purchaser, that if the work is good for little, there is at least enough of it. Yet not to be what nobody has ever been, entirely free from all disinterestedness, now that I have taken up Mr. Johnson, I mean, before I let him go again, to try if something cannot be made out of him to my own advantage, if not to my readers entertainment. No, it cannot be that such a dawdling, dead-alive, half-sleeping, half-waking, drowsy subject should content them.

THE husband of Mrs. Johnson, who had little merit besides that of being her husband, when at school, was a great creator of mirth to such boys as happened to be wiser than himself; how many they were, generally depended on the number of his fellow-students, who loved him because he was good-natured, and honoured him with the nick-name of Stalking Billy, because he had not spirit to resent their freedom. When his family made proposals for him to Miss Osmond, which she accepted, in consideration of his riches and the little lift he could give her into rank, and when she was become the honourable Mrs. Johnson;

Johnson ; the school-name which had stuck to him till then, and signified nothing, she, in her fits of fondness, had the goodness to exchange for one that signified something, and would often call out upon him, when in her very best and indulgent humours—Oh, thou dear man of pasteboard ! why do you do this, or why do you that ?—but it was always for his own good, and never in anger, that she thus pleasantly rebuked her man of pasteboard !

UNDER these family regulations, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson passed for the very happiest of all married couples ; and to keep up the character of being the best wife in the world, she often would let him stand at the parlour window, and peep over the green blinds ; the best possible method she could divine of shewing her acquaintance, as they passed along the street, if they looked that way out of their carriages, that she had a husband, otherwise it might have remained to some of them a matter of doubt, the lady being too fashionable ever to be seen with him out of her own house, and not always in it ; for, on her public days at home, it was his or her custom for him to take a sober ride into the country, and not to return again till her company were retired.

C H A P. XXIII.

Resentment—Rural felicity at a hotel—Spiritual comfort—Its consequence—A loss.

LOWLY and meek as I have hitherto delineated the sensitive soul of Mrs. Johnson, yet, as mortals are frail, and women the frailest of mortals, my reader must not expect that a summer sky always shone on her countenance, or her temper so stagnant, that it could not be ruffled by the storms of passion, when provoked, like other people's tempers.—She was, on the contrary, remarkably irritable upon certain occasions, perhaps owing to the extraordinary tenderness of her feelings, an unfortunate predilection for the misfortunes of her fellow-creatures, which had been long the subject of complaint to her family, her friends, and her physicians.

WITH so much philanthropy, can it be reasonably supposed otherwise than that her heart beat high with resentment, whilst relating to the
attentive

attentive Mrs. Vernon, how impertinently she had been used at the funeral of Miss Montreville ; or is it very unnatural that such a woman, in such a situation, should call the person by whom she had been so grossly insulted, an old officious devil of a parson ?—Indeed, her pure and eloquent blood was boiling over with rage, as she poured into the ears of her faithful friend, anathemas, not only on Mr. Armatage, but also bestowing them in equal proportions, on all the ungrateful monsters at the castle, whose inhuman faces she would never see again as long as she lived !

SUCH were the agitating emotions of her harrassed mind and fatigued body, when she received from the hand of her dear Vernon an accommodating cordial, which will need no other description than that it was *spiritual* and efficacious ! She afterwards sat down with her obliging hostess, to a table spread with the choicest viands, and some bottles of Burgundy that would not have disgraced the cellars of a prince. Having eat plentifully, and drank still more plentifully, her philanthropy returned, in so full a tide, that it carried off all the animosity with which her mind had been so lately occupied ; and so completely was her heart now softened, even towards her enemies, that a few tears actually hissed upon her broad, red-hot cheeks, as she gave a sort of disjointed verbal message, which was to be carried to the castle, in the form of a civil enquiry after the health

health of Lady Gertrude and Sir William Montreville.

THE answer to this condescending howd'ye was remarkable for nothing but its coldness and its conciseness; Sir William, who had arrived at home just before, being the framer of it. I have hinted, that it was with some difficulty of speech this message to the castle was dictated by the amiable chief mourner, who had begun to take spiritual comfort; and have only to add, that when the reply was brought back, the good lady was too happy to understand it; nor did she know till it was repeated to her the next day, whether it was meant to convey thanks or reproaches.

NOT to return again to Mrs. Johnson, her virtues, her foibles, or her affairs, at least as long as she continues her residence at the Montreville arms, I shall contrive to cram into this chapter a calamitous accident that befel her during the month of rustication that she passed with her confidential hostess, in rural sports, and domestic felicity.

THE same good dinners, the same good wine, and the same good company, served day after day to render the village of Worthenton, in the estimation of Mrs. Johnson, one of the most eligible retirements on the face of the earth. What very much enhanced her sedentary pleasures, arose from her not having seen or heard any thing of

the insulting Montrevilles, after the one single message that had passed between them on the day of the funeral. Sir William, to whose sight her appearance would have been poison, kept close to the castle, as long as she remained in their neighbourhood, that he might put it out of the power of accident to throw her in his way; nor indeed was the privacy of this pair of inimitable inseparables disturbed by the intrusion of any other society!

THE month was June—the weather hot—the walks tempting—particulary shady and pleasant were the wood that separated the village from the castle: not shut up like the bowels of a miser's compassion, or the treasures of wisdom in the breast of a selfish man, who will use them only to his own advantage; but, like the hearts of Lady Gertrude and Sir William Montreville, their respected and respectable owners, they were opened for the accomodation of peasants as well as peers, and the very poorest of the hamleters, if they lay in the way of their daily labour, were welcome to pass through them.

IN the beautiful recesses of these woods would Mrs. Johnson often walk with her friend Mrs. Vernon; nay, sometimes they would go there together, when they could only ramble tenderly supported by entangling their arms in each other; and, when arrived there, they very much delighted to find out the most unfrequented paths, in which they might talk over such events as were already gone by,

by, and anticipate others that were to happen in future.

IN one of these *tête-à-tête* walks—I mean rambles—for the honourable lady had not only dined plentifully before it was undertaken, but heartily pledged her hospitable entertainer in the many healths she politely proposed, to the success of all Madam Johnson's wishes, to her good health, to the prosperity of the young gentleman her son, grand husbands to her daughters, and many more such fascinating toasts, which nobody could possibly have refused, except they had been disinclined to drink more than nature demands, or moderation prescribes.—In one of these rambles it was, that, coming into the fresh air, the fair guest of the Montreville Arms complained to her hostess, in whose bent elbow she was holding as fast as she could, that a swimming had come over her head; and proposed, with all the remaining strength this sudden seizure had left her capable of exerting, that they should accept the friendly aid of a neighbouring bank, which offered them its green side for a cushion of repose.—Down they sat, and Mrs. Vernon, drawing a fan from her pocket, used it full in the face of her patroness, to so efficacious a purpose, that in twenty minutes she was not only able to speak, but became more than ever communicative, and very good company.

FATAL indulgence! fatal consequences!—It produced an accident more afflicting than any power less than Providence itself would have presumed

presumed to level against the internal peace and security of such a woman as Mrs. Johnson.

IN the midst of a sometimes interrupted, but always interesting conversation, she produced, for the better information of her smiling companion, a Packet of considerable size; in which it may be reasonably supposed was contained something or other necessary to the elucidating the subject of their irregular *tête-à-tête*.—Mrs. Vernon, with her mouth half-open, and her eyes half-shut, nodded over the contents of this Packet, till, it is probable she could distinguish them no longer; for, when she returned this parcel or packet, it seemed a tacit agreement between the inspector and the owner, that all further local debate on the matter should be deferred to another opportunity, by the endeavours they both used to get upon their legs. And then it was that Mrs. Johnson, from the swimming of her head, the trembling of her hand, or some other unknown cause, permitted the unfortunate Packet to mistake its way, and, instead of returning to her pocket, to find a more certain establishment at the bottom of a high tuft of grass, from whence it never might have been dragged, but for the circumstance mentioned in the first chapter of this volume: which happened six months after, when Richard and Sarah Adams, feeling themselves inclined to regale on a mess of pottage, stooped to pick up their penny-royal from the very spot, and under a soft bed of snow, which served to keep it from decay, they found out, and bore away the valuable deposit.

I FORESEE

I FORESEE that I shall run this chapter much beyond the bounds to which I wished it confined, merely to keep my word; having promised my readers to cram into it all that I have at present to say of Mrs. Johnson and her affairs.

THE loss she had sustained, through her imbecility, in the excursion to the wood was not discovered till many days after the sad adventure; and, when it first occurred to her returning memory that such a packet had been in her possession when she entered the parish of Worthenton, and that she could not now tell what was become of it. To measure the value of its contents by the torturing agonies into which she was flung when the dreadful accident broke upon her recollection, would not be a fair way of judging; because some people set suppositious prices on a lock of hair, a crooked sixpence, or any other pretty affectionate token of friendship, little inferior to that of rubies, or any other precious gems.

Mrs. Vernon and Mrs. Margaret Davis were both summoned to assist in council, and to find out, if that were possible, how it had been lost, and how it was to be regained; — for here I am to observe, that the latter as well as the former was very much in the confidence of the all condescending Mrs. Johnson.

ONE might suppose that when three wise heads are laid together, they will produce something; but

but here the consultation was productive of worse than nothing; they only served to alarm, interrupt, and confuse one another: all allowed that it was missing, but none could tell how it was missed, when it was missed, or where it was missed:—with ninety-nine chances to one against the efforts of memory, Mrs. Vernon did recollect that she had once seen it; but as she could trace back to no particular place or date, she might as well never have seen it.—The lady herself remembered that she had taken it out of her strong box, for the purpose of shewing it to Mrs. Vernon—that she did believe she had actually shewed it to her; but for want of a *when* and a *where* the puzzle was as inexplicable as ever.—Oh, the effects of *head-swimming*! If it had not been for that bewitching malady, they both would have known where it was lost, and where to have found it.—But what said Mrs. Margaret Davis?—Why, she protested, with tears in her eyes, that she knew no more of the matter than the parson of the parish.

THE sportsman pursues the chace with less eagerness, and mistaken mortals run after happiness with less avidity, than this female trio of the Montreville Arms hunted the lost Packet: but all their pains ended like those of the wisest man, and of all the wise men since the days of Solomon, in vanity and vexation of spirit.

WHEN every thing within the house had been searched and researched a hundred times over—
when

when their public haunts and private ways had undergone an equally critical examination; to those useless efforts was added the following advertisement, inserted in three country papers, and nine times repeated.

ADVERTISEMENT.

STOLEN, lost, or mislaid, a packet or parcel, with three black seals, all broken, tied round with a black ribbon; whoever will bring the same to Mr. Frederic Vernon, landlord of the Montreville Arms hotel, in the parish of Worthenton, in the county of——, shall receive fifty guineas reward,—and no questions asked.——

N. B. It can be of no use to any body but the advertiser.

DILIGENCE and rewards were alike unsuccessful: snug lay the pain-giving Packet for another, and perhaps better occasion, than returning again into the hands of its former holder; so that when she went back to her family she was compelled to leave it behind; a misfortune for which she was in reality more inconsolable than she even appeared to be, either for the exit or at the interment of her gentle cousin.

SURELY I have now been long enough at the Montreville Arms to gratify the curiosity of others

as much as is necessary to the thread of my own story, I am therefore glad to leave the hotel, and to drop a sort of people, with whom I do not like to associate, for company more suited to my inclinations.

C H A P. XXIV.

*A noble creature—Another hotel—A tour shortened—
—A pleasant meeting—Productive of gloomy consequences.*

LOOK at the top of this chapter once more, and afterwards I will tell you how I came to begin it so oddly.—When the self-deceived Sir William Montreville was flying on the wings of fraternal affection towards the then peaceable, now tumultuous city of Paris; there to meet, according to his sanguine but erroneous expectations, his lovely and beloved sister, the graces of his own manly person did not pass unnoticed or unadmired: various were the phrases in which the latter was expressed; but not one of them pleases me so well as the observation of an old lady, who was getting out of her carriage as he was stepping into his; apparently struck with his figure and countenance, turning to a young female, on whose arm she was supported, she directed her eyes towards Sir William, and cried out—*What a noble creature!*

THIS

THIS little eulogium ought to satisfy the vanity of any man, because, in a very short sketch, it includes a great deal of character; and if my readers of a certain description are displeased that I do not enter into a more minute detail of his pretensions on the score of personal perfections, I shall tell them, with my usual plain way of dealing, that they who put a pencil into the hands of a novice, have no right to find fault with the painting. I was not born for an artist; what talents nature or education had given me, lay dormant; I never should have exerted them, till, by a cruel combination for which I am not accountable, the labour was forced upon me. I do not address this apology to *all* my readers; those for whom *only* it is intended, and their number is not a small one, will understand my meaning—and at the hour of darkness, or at the latest hour of death—contrition, unbidden and unwelcome, will steal upon their conscience, and the blush of retrospection cover their faces with confusion!

I HAVE one little word more to add, which is only applicable to the *female* and *younger* part of that society to which I have dedicated, in general, the former part of my excuse for conveying to them an idea of Sir William Montreville's attractions, rather from the exclamation of an old woman, than by exerting my own talents for their amusement; but I have so few of what are called talents, that sometimes not knowing what to say next, I am ready to cry out with my fellow sufferer Job, Oh that mine enemies would write a book!—To which I would have added—rather than have forced me to write one.

The

The reason, my *dearest friends*, why I did not describe the eyes, the teeth, the hair, and the smile of Sir William Montreville, was, that had I interested you ever so tenderly in his favour, it could have turned to no account; you could have made nothing of him, for to tell you the truth, his affections were already engaged to a very amiable young lady, from whom it would have been impossible to alienate them—no, not even if you were to try those arts over again, which have been practised so successfully on the hearts of other men in his predicament: steadiness of mind is a good guard against all manner of deceptions;—Sir William's choice was not made in haste, nor repented at leisure; where he loved, there he honoured; and if you had thrown all the darts which Envy carries in her ten-fold quiver, not one of them would have touched that rooted and invariable confidence he acknowledged for the object of his attachment! If it had been capable of meeting with a shock from the endeavours, either of her male or female friends, or both united, she might have found enough consolation in missing a man who did not deserve her presence, to make up for the mortification of being deceived.

WHILST busied about these apologies, I feel myself sporting as it were, on the flowery verge of a forest, whose gloom I am loth to enter, though fated to penetrate—the dreary melancholy road lies before me—I am going to rush forwards; reader, follow me if you dare.

THIRTY-FIVE minutes past seven o'clock, and after a pleasant passage, neither too calm nor too boisterous, Sir William Montreville landed at Calais with a light heart and gay expectations. He finished his voyage in one of those small boats which are always put off from the French side to the relief of weary passengers, who, sick of the water themselves, or the company they sail with, are too impatient to wait for the springing up of a fresh gale, or the more slow but certain assistance of a sluggish tide, and are glad to catch at any mode of conveyance, however troublesome or insecure, that will bring them but one hour sooner to the haven where they would be.

ONLY Sir William's valet attended his master on shore, the rest of his servants, as well as his baggage, was left behind in the packet, to attend the leisure of the wind, the tide, and the captain, who did not give them much encouragement to suppose they should get into the harbour till midnight.

MONSIEUR Dessain's commodious hotel was destined by the happy traveller to the few hours of repose he designed to take at Calais, before he pursued his journey. Every body who has gone the same road, and stopped at the same house, must know, if they are not perfectly insensible, that Monsieur Dessain is one of the very civilest little gentlemen to be found amongst those who are of the same hospitable profession with himself.

SIR

SIR William Montreville was a stranger to him ; he looked in his face and was ready to cry out, in the old lady's own phrase : *What a noble creature !* —but for his life he could not recollect that he had ever before seen him in that country, neither did he exactly know his rank, or the condition of his fortune, when first he waited on him to receive his commands ; yet these impediments were no drawback to Monsieur's advances, who treated his guest with as much courtesy, as if he had found his name in the peerage, and known the value of his estates to an acre.

SIR William, with equal politeness, and perhaps with more sincerity, thanked him for his offers to do him all manner of services, and having omitted to supply himself with French money, whilst he stayed at Dover, easily got that matter adjusted. Monsieur bowed his little apple head to the ground, laid his hand on his breast, and declared he should be but too much honoured, if he would have the condescension to appoint him his banker, to the full amount of his abilities, on the present, or on any future occasion.

WHAT a deal of mischief may I not be doing by this partial representation ; for should any of my poor, literally poor, readers, hereafter travel the same road, and expect the same generous offers to be made him, I shall have led him into a very mortifying error, from which a little wholesome advise, timely administered, may yet save him.

I ADVISE

I ADVISE you then with all seriousness, not to set out for France on a saving expectation, or in pursuit of a true friend, hoping, on the strength of my report, to find him in the character of Monsieur Dessain : there are others, besides David Simple, who have travelled farther than over London and Westminster, in search of a true friend, and come back without one.

How much trouble am I taking to undo what I had done ! Nor shall I think my fault sufficiently repaired, till I have divided the act from the motive ; when that duty is performed, if you will proceed to the hotel of my recommendation, without money in your pockets, it is no longer my fault but your own.

DURING the time that Sir William Montreville was regretting, to the really good tempered Dessain, that negligence by which he should find himself unprovided with the currency of the country till he got to Paris ; and whilst the kind-hearted little man was making him the most unbounded offers of assistance, it is incumbent on me to remark that the former had drawn from his pocket a very heavy purse of English guineas, which carry their recommendation with them every where, and that the eyes of the latter were very much taken up in admiring them : it is not unnatural to suppose, that the sight of these splendid guineas was a passport that gave him a more ready entrance into the good graces of Monsieur, than without them he had any title to expect : besides—if there is a besides needful to explain away a seeming act of

of kindness, bordering on romantic generosity, and that to an absolute stranger, whose face he had never seen, whose name he had never heard—I must hint to that class of my readers, whom it is now my business to undeceive, that a valet who is well known to Monsieur, and has been often at his house with travellers of *rank* and *riches*, is no bad letter of credit; Sir William's man had been there five different times, with five different gentlemen of *respectability*.—Dessain had already seen him in the court, and though he had not shaken him by the hand, nor asked him one leading question; it was very likely that he should guess at the importance of the master by the good condition of his servant.

WHEN Sir William had ordered something for his supper, at an early hour, and that horses should be kept in readiness for him to set out as soon as his people were landed from the packet: when he had again thanked his host for past civilities, and present professions, and whilst the little man was in the attitude of making his very lowest bow, an English carriage drove furiously into the court-yard. Monsieur Dessain shortening his congee, ran out to welcome his newly arrived guest, and to do the honours of his hotel.

SIR William walked mechanically to the window, to see who alighted from the chariot, not with any expectation of their being known to him; but to say the truth he had been so short a time out

out of his own country, he could not help thinking, that those who are returning to it must feel themselves particularly fortunate: if this is not saying much for his taste, it brings no charge I hope against his understanding.

A SERVANT first jumped from the carriage which was engaging the whole of Sir William's attention; he then let down the step for his master to get out—Sir William eyed the latter with much eagerness, and said to himself, I should know that face.—As the young man pulled off his hat, as if heated with travelling, he had a still better view of him, and with a transport of pleasure, not to be expressed, recognized in the features of this stranger, an old school-fellow, one of the companions of his early youth, and one of the best beloved of his friends. Lord Fitzhenry was a few years his senior, had just finished his travels, and was then returning to his family as fast as he could, intending to stay only a few hours at Dessain's.

INDEPENDENT of the warm friendship that subsisted between them, established on a long acquaintance, there was another and tenderer motive for that excess of joy Sir William was conscious of feeling on this unexpected *rencontre*. I have heard it observed, that when the heart is tenderly attached to any particular object, it is natural to become interested for every thing and every body that is connected with that object. Sir William was in love, and Lord Fitzhenry nearly related to the mistress of his affections, who was niece to his mother the Countess of Uxinton.

UNDER

UNDER these circumstances it will not appear surprising, that the moment Sir William Montreville recollected this dear friend, he should fly to greet him, without waiting the formality of a message. Ah ! how swift were the steps with which he bounded to meet him ! how animated the air with which he caught hold of his hand, crying out, dear Fitzhenry ! do I thus meet you accidentally when I would have gone half the world over to have come up with you at last ?

THERE was so much of hilarity in the countenance of the speaker, so much of joy in the tones of his voice, that Lord Fitzhenry saw in a moment, his friend did not feel, even by anticipation the misery that awaited him ; his Lordship was before this painful meeting, on his own account, disappointed, indisposed, and melancholy—the sight of Sir William, the task he had to perform, did not exhilarate his spirits ; and whilst he returned his affectionate salutation with warmth equal to his own, clouds of a deeper tinge passed over his countenance ; and any other spectator than the unsuspecting brother of Adelaide, might have seen a tide of tears rushing into his eyes, that were with difficulty restrained from overflowing.

SIR William Montreville put his arm through Lord Fitzhenry's, and as he drew him along towards the room he occupied himself, which was on the left hand side fronting the court, I see, said he, that your face, my Lord, is turned towards dear
Old

Old England, but now you must positively change your *route*, and go back with me : I have no other business in Paris, but to fetch my sister ; my poor mother is sickening for her return, and I have promised to be at home in three weeks

LORD Fitzhenry sighed, shook his head, but made no reply.

I must have none of your ill-omened, silent prognostics, continued he gaily ; say at once, you will or you will not turn back with me.

WE certainly part no more, returned the other in a tremulous voice, till we land together in Britain.

WHEN he said this, they were come into the room whither they were going ; Sir William was all extacy at the certainty of being so well fitted in a companion for the remainder of his excursion, and ringing the bell, ordered supper to be hastened, as he thought his friend appeared to be extremely fatigued with his journey, and in need of refreshment.

ALAS ! how little did he surmise the cause of Lord Fitzhenry's dejection—he had sunk into the first chair that came in his way, thrown his hat on the ground, and looked so sadly serious, that Sir William, laying his hand on his shoulder, taxed him with the very common misfortune of having
left

left his heart behind him; and to rouse him out of the reverie he had fallen into, asked if, in his peregrinations, he had ever happened to meet with Adelaide?

At that name he started—arose suddenly—looked wildly—walked up and down with disordered steps, muttering to himself—Adelaide! the adorable Adelaide!—Oh William!—dear William! and relapsed into his former silence.

THE unfortunate brother, doubly unfortunate, because he was innocently sporting with his own misery, so totally mistook the meaning of his friend, that he cried out with encreasing gaiety and good humour, What am I to think, Fitzhenry, of your perplexities—your tender sighs—your absence—your exclamations?—I hope Adelaide has not taken you in—faith I shall pity you if that shall be the case, because I know she has no heart to give you in exchange;—adding, with a certain expression of countenance, which, at any other time would not have passed unnoticed, When did you hear from the Davenports? Does Montague tell you any thing about their returning to England?

LORD Fitzhenry, perfectly inattentive to these questions, and to the manner in which they were asked, replied to them only by putting others to Sir William, which were foreign to the subject—Montreville, said he, have you received no late accounts from Paris? have the Johnsons any expectations of your joining them there?

To

To be sure they have, for I wrote my sister of my intentions as soon as I knew them myself.

YOUR sister! repeated he, in a tone of agony, and hid his face with his hands.

If you go on thus, my Lord, and take the matter so seriously, you will infect me with your sadness; in pity to me, do not think any more of Adelaide—from the inconstancy of almost any other woman in the world, there might be hopes of a revolution; but no man upon the face of the earth will ever rival Edmund Davenport in her affections.—He looked steadfastly on him, and saw some tears trickle through his fingers—Dear Fitzhenry, continued he, forgive me if I have afflicted you by my ill-timed raillery; but we must not permit this wound to rankle, I hoped it was only skin deep, and you must still allow me to hope that it is reserved for brighter eyes than my sister's to heal it over.

It is too much!—it is insupportable! cried he, starting up and laying hold of Sir William's hand—Yes, I am wounded, but it is for you that I am wounded, dearest Montreville! It is in your power to mitigate the oppression that weighs down my spirits—let me see you resigned, and I shall be comforted.

THE alteration these few last words produced on Sir William was not more instantaneous than violent—Starting several paces back, his eye-balls stretched

stretched as if he would penetrate into the very soul of Lord Fitzhenry for an explanation—with a face paler than ashes, he cried out,—In the name of God what is your meaning—your terrible meaning? What of my sister—in pity tell me what you know of my sister!

She has been very ill.

VERY ill! Adelaide very ill, and her mother, her brother not informed of her illness! He paused—A thousand curses light on the treacherous Johnsons—I thought how it would be—it is all their doing—let us be gone this moment,—dear Fitzhenry. If Adelaide is so ill perhaps—but I cannot bear that thought—what would become of my——his voice was choked, there was a wildness in his eyes that added alarm to the profound melancholy of his friend.

MONTREVILLE, said he, in a gentle compassionate tone, re-taking the hand which had the moment before been withdrawn from his hold, you know my friendship for you; can you doubt my readiness to attend you when or wherever you please, except to Paris?—To Paris you must not go—Ah, dear William! let us return to England; Lady Gertrude will want your presence to support her.

To England!

Yes, and we will set out to-morrow morning.

ENOUGH

ENOUGH ! cried the miserable brother of Adelaide, and wrung the hand of his friend with torture—It is enough, I comprehend all my misfortune—and rushing out of the room, Lord Fitzhenry saw no more of him till midnight.

C H A P. XXV.

Shorter than the former—the subject continued.

LORD Fitzhenry waited three hours in the utmost anxiety and consternation for the return of his friend, who had been during that time walking to and fro in the garden of the *hotel*; in what state of mind was impressed on his countenance in stronger characters than language could have spoken them.

WHEN he came back to the room his eyes were red and swollen; he threw himself on a chair by the side of Lord Fitzhenry, who held his grief of so sacred a nature, as not to interrupt its course by unmeaning consolations, or frivolous observations; and I do not know when their solemn silence would have been broken, if Sir William had not suddenly started up, and said to Lord Fitzhenry, laying a hand on his shoulder: I want to ask you a question, but I shudder to announce it.—Where are the
dear

dear Re——?—he stopped, and could go no further.

SPARE yourself! replied his Lordship, spare yourself, dear Montreville! I understand what you would say; I will conceal nothing that is necessary you should be informed of—The remains of your lamented sister were yesterday to cross at this port, but I will step out and bring you more certain intelligence.—He did as he said he would do; and, on making the proper enquiries, discovered that the body had been embarked from Calais nearly about the same hour that Sir William Montreville had taken his passage from the other side—What a fatality!

WHAT a fatality! exclaimed the afflicted brother, when informed of this circumstance.—Where then was my sympathy?—the corpse of Adelaide floating on the same ocean with me; perhaps the vessel that contained it within sight of those eyes which have so often delighted to dwell on her innocent loveliness. Oh! stupid and insensible heart! By what idle ideas wert thou occupied at this frightful moment? Wert thou dancing in the sunbeams of hope, when thou shouldst have been fainting under the gloom of *presentiment*?

It is the most unthankful task in the world to hold out the cup of consolation where despair stands ready to dash it out of your hand; and Lord Fitzhenry continued silent, because he really did

did not know what to say, till Sir William asked, if he could tell him by whom the body of his sister was attended. To which his Lordship replied, that he understood it was accompanied only by Mrs. Johnson and her servants.

THE name of Johnson was a sudden shock of electrical tendency, that drew him out of the profound meditation into which he had fallen, and divested himself of every thing that a few moments before might have appeared to resemble resignation or composure.

GETTING hastily up from his chair, and forcibly striking his poor aching forehead with his clenched hand, and stamping his foot to the ground, in a paroxysm of fury, he pronounced a volley of execrations on the Johnson family, which it is neither necessary nor proper for me to relate; they were such as a very young man, full of spirit, generosity, and affection, might be reasonably supposed to bestow on those whom he suspected to have been the murderers of a tenderly beloved sister.—Yes! cried he, it is the Johnsons who have been the executioners of Adelaide: if they had not designed her death, we should at least have heard of the illness that must have preceded it—Oh miserable partiality! oh detestable legacy!—but for that legacy—Oh my mother!—What will become of my mother!

THIS filial reflection on the woes of Lady Gertrude softened him to tears, and he shed them plentifully.

WHEN the servant came in to spread the table for supper, Sir William Montreville was gone on his solitary promenade to the garden; and Lord Fitzhenry, who knew by his own disinclination to eat, how much less his friend would be disposed to partake of the refreshments he had ordered, desired the preparations for supper might be superseded, by getting an apartment immediately ready for the reception of his fellow-traveller; to which apartment he suffered himself to be conducted, just as the clock struck one. Lord Fitzhenry having forced him to swallow two glasses of wine, led him thither, and did not leave the side of his bed for the remainder of the night—a specimen of modern male friendship, which will do no discredit to the age we live in.

THE oppression of sadness with which Lord Fitzhenry entered the gates of Calais, was occasioned by an affair of the heart, which hereafter, and when I am more at leisure, I shall possibly lay hold of as a pretty little episode, to relieve the attention of my readers from more weighty business.

WHATEVER was the cause of Lord Fitzhenry's sadness, it found no abatement in his being forced

to

to make another as sad as himself; and all that night he sat by the pillow of Sir William Montreville a sincere mourner for the affliction with which his intelligence had loaded him; and in the morning his anxiety was very much encreased, by finding the object of his kind attention in a high fever. The faculty were immediately called in to his assistance; and, though his symptoms were of the most unfavourable sort, yet, by the skill of his physician, the unremitting care of his friend, a good constitution, and more fortitude, when in a capacity to exert it, than generally falls to the lot of young men whose spirits are ardent, and whose passions are extreme, Sir William was soon able to re-embark for Dover, and from thence arrived at the castle, a few hours only after the interment of his sister.

LORD Fitzhenry was under a kind of engagement to meet his family in town by a certain day, and the going out of his way with Sir William must prevent him from being punctual to his first appointment. But what are the bars that a generous mind will not get over in the attainment of a philanthropical pursuit?

THEIR journey was not quite so gloomy as might have been expected; Lord Fitzhenry seemed to have forgot his own cares, to alleviate those of his companion: he even entered into a little history of his

his own disappointments, and treated them much more ludicrously than he felt them ; which effectually removed the suspicion Sir William at first entertained of his Lordship's being seriously attached to Adelaide.

THE meeting between Sir William Montreville and his heart-broken mother it is not for me to describe ; could I represent it with as much energy as I feel it, my fair reader would have no reason to thank me for robbing her eyes of their lustre ; and, if through my want of skill the picture should be deficient in colouring, that would spoil all ; so it is best to leave the work to her own imagination, which no doubt will finish it much more to the purpose.

LORD Fitzhenry, after reposing one night at the castle, on the next morning set off for London. He had not been admitted to the presence of Lady Gertrude, but heard with great satisfaction that the return of her son had afforded to her afflicted mind all the consolation it was yet able to receive, or may perhaps be ever capable of receiving.

C H A P. XXVI.

*New characters—Old incidents—Another proof
that friendship is not circumscribed by situations.*

WHEREVER new characters are to make their appearance, a new chapter should introduce them.—The Davenports are a family I very much respect, and are by their own worthiness entitled to all the civility with which it is possible to usher their names into these pages.

Mr. Davenport, like the late Sir Thomas Montreville, possessed many refinements which are the peculiar gifts of taste and education; he was also very much distinguished by the bounty of nature, who had liberally endowed him with sound sense, an excellent heart, and the best disposition in the world. Besides, he sprang from a good family, and if he had not added to the splendour of its fame in the field, or in the cabinet, neither had he disgraced his progenitors by a base action, or a weak sentence.—As to his fortune,
which

which is no part of the man, I shall speak of that hereafter.

If Mr. Davenport was in all respects so well suited to associate with Sir Thomas Montreville, his wife was not less qualified, by her many virtues, to be the beloved companion and bosom friend of Lady Gertrude; they were both the best of wives, the best of mothers, an honour to the domestic character, and a credit to their sex.

An intercourse in the early parts of their lives had been established between these four amiable people, which suffered no abatement when they entered into their several engagements for life. Lady Uxington, the mother of Lord Fitzhenry, and the sister of Mr. Davenport, was also one of the same set, and of the same sort; but owing to her connexion with what is generally called the great world, and her lord's estates being scattered in various counties very distant from the castle, it was seldom, not more than once in two or three years, that she could indulge her affectionate inclinations, by passing a few weeks in a society to which she was most sincerely attached: for, when Lady Gertrude, following the example of these charming sisters, bestowed herself on the man of her choice, their united entreaties had prevailed on Mr. and Mrs. Davenport to remove into their neighbourhood, who being unable to resist the temptation of living near them, disposed of a house they had just purchased near——, and rented a small

a small box within a mile of their friends superb mansion.

Now this is the second instance I have brought before your eyes, my philosophical reader, of friendship subsisting where equality is not.

How can that be? you cry. Where lies the inequality between Sir Thomas Montreville and Mr. Davenport? If you have not led us into an error, they were equally well born, and indebted pretty much in the same degree to nature and to education.

Yes, say I, this is all true. But is there nothing else that constitutes inequality besides birth and education? Whatever you may advance to oppose my argument, it is not more faithfully evinced than in the distribution of wealth; or why is it that a poor gentleman, who inherits only his few paternal acres, spends less, is less followed, less admired, less caressed, than a Nabob just returned from the East, laden with half a million of *sterling* qualifications? Are you still at a loss for the inequality? then I must explain it more clearly.

Mr. Davenport's rent-roll did not amount to as many hundreds per annum, as his neighbour the baronet counted thousands. Now, though in every thing, but being a gentleman, a man of honour, and a scholar, he was very much inferior to Sir Thomas Montreville; yet this difference did not

not block up, or obstruct, that rich vein of mutual kindness which ran through the hearts of these two families, by choaking it up with the rubbish of ostentation on the one part, or debasing it on the other, either by envy or servility. In short, so equal was the scale carried between them, that it would have been impossible for a stranger to decide, when he saw them together, which was the richest man of the two.

THIS is a sort of unequal friendship different from what I have before described as subsisting between the honourable Mrs. Johnson and my flip-pant hostess of the Montreville Arms. The Davenports were of noble extraction : but not springing out from the very top of their genealogical tree, their portion of lands was smaller than their portion of nobility : whereas, if Mrs. Vernon, the friend of Mrs. Johnson, had any pretensions to birth or precedence, such pretensions it is not in my power to ascertain. She was indeed a foreigner, and might have been a lady of consequence in her own country, of which circumstance I must confess myself to be totally in the dark ; what little I do know of her former history, shall be revealed to my reader in the ensuing chapter.

C H A P. XXVII.

An introduction——an adventure——a removal——

The advantage of being a good performer on the hurdy-gurdy.

MRS. Vernon had the honour of scrambling into this checquered world amongst the mountains of Savoy ; and I here aver, what I have hinted before, that if she had any claims to gentility, I know nothing of the matter.

JACQUILINE, the heroine of my short tale—for I promise my reader it shall be a short one—did certainly pass (and the report has never been contradicted) for the daughter of a poor wretched couple, who would not have been poor if they could have carved better for themselves by any means in the world, industry excepted——Buried in the mountains, with none but neighbours in as miserable a situation as their own, how few were the opportunities they had of profiting by their inclinations to mend their condition by ways and means not in the direct road of honesty!

At length an occasion offered, which was beyond the most sanguine of their hopes or expectations ; and it happened too when the pretty Jacqueline was in the zenith of her charms, or it would never, most probably, have happened at all.

A young gentleman of some notoriety, pursuing his solitary tour over the Continent, to gather his nosegay of exotic improvements, in going to pick them up amongst the wilds of Savoy, saw by chance the little Jacqueline, to whom, mistaking her for the divinity of the mountains he did homage, by bestowing more praises on her beauty than her beauty really deserved. Nature and the lessons of her parents had made her a finished coquette at seventeen ; and she knew so well how to manage for the interest of her family, that all the money he could get together was left behind with the old people in exchange for their daughter ; whom, with their consent and entire approbation, he conducted to Britain—the rarest gem in his collection of natural history.

This little mountain-shrub was fated to bloom but a short season in the garden of luxury ; her lover, I will not call him her seducer, very soon transplanted her into the common ground of his own country.—When all her charms were fled, the education she had received from her parents afforded her other resources : she was a wonderful performer on the hurdy-gurdy ; and the honourable
Mrs.

Mrs. Johnson preferred the music of a hurdy-gurdy to all other music in the world.

OFTEN did this great lady listen with exquisite sensibility to the sounds of Jacqueline's instrument, as she played under her dressing-room windows; which it was customary for the cunning Savoyard to do an hour or two daily, when she knew from Mrs. Margaret Davis that her lady was alone, and her heart disposed for the reception of harmony.

ONCE, in going to her carriage, Mrs. Johnson condescended to ask several questions of Jacqueline, and was answered in such good English, and with so much adroitness, that very soon after, she signified to Mrs. Margaret her intentions to do something for the girl's establishment. She accordingly took her into her house, and so completely into her good graces, that she had her taught to read, to write, make caps, get up fine linen, and keep family secrets; this last part of her education Mrs. Johnson would let nobody have any hand in but herself. She had no reason to find fault with the docility of her pupil; and in due time Jacqueline's genius was rewarded, by an appointment to a place about the person of Mrs. Osmond, her then almost superannuated grandmother, a situation of infinite trust and equal confidence—How discharged by the artful Savoyard has been already related, as well as the legacy by which her services were distinguished.

BESIDES

BESIDES those instances I have quoted, there are many others that I could tell you of, to prove that the attachment thus formed between the lady and her *protégée* has no similitude to the disinterested ties which bound together the rich inhabitants of the castle and the humble dwellers of the cottage: the means of the former were enlarged; to them only fortune had been munificent; but nature was liberal to both, and their hearts were cast exactly in the same mould. The castle might have been called the palace of benevolence, the cottage its banqueting-house.

THE Montrevilles and Davenports were united by mutual virtues and mutual kind offices. Whatever were the virtues of Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Vernon, however equally they may have been gifted with the soul's endowments, nothing can be more certain than that all the kind offices proceeded from one side only; at least there was no ostentation in the meek mild mistress of the Montreville Arms hotel, to tell tales, or betray that the favours she received from Mrs. Johnson had been purchased or returned by any conditional services on her part: whatever use she could make herself of to her warm and bountiful patroness was a secret to every body in the world but themselves and Mrs. Margaret Davis.

It has given me pain to take off my reader's attention so long from the present situation of the afflicted Lady Gertrude, to bring them acquainted with former times when she first came to settle

settle at the castle, besides now and then throwing in the way of their natural and laudable curiosity characters that are not calculated to please any of them: such as are honest and well-disposed will shudder and turn aside with disgust from Mrs. Johnson and her confidante, whilst others, who may have acted with any thing resembling their duplicity, will not like to fix their eyes on a mirror where they may see a rival as eminent, as ingenious, and, perhaps, as successful as themselves.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the objections I have stated to my rambles, I must still pursue them, as they are absolutely necessary to the thread of my story. In the first place, the circumstances I am going to repeat are introductory to a very pretty love tale, and in the next I cannot make out my book without them.

C H A P. XXVIII.

A philosophical reason for stepping over sixteen years, the transactions of which time, had they been regularly collected, might have afforded a great deal of convenient matter to lengthen out a narrative.

SIXTEEN years of undisturbed tranquillity and uninterrupted friendship had the Montrevilles and Davenports passed in the neighbourhood of each other, with no very severe misfortunes, no very sad occurrences, no discontents of any kind, to mark the progress of time. What have I to do with these sixteen years? The hours that glide along with a serene and even steadiness are less easy to trace than the heavy ones that leave the furrows of care behind them; so I shall let them pass by without notice, only remarking that the intermediate space I have been speaking of had a nearer resemblance to the age of gold than to the age of iron.

The inhabitants of the castle and the cottage seemed to be actuated by the same virtues, and to be
be

be governed by the same destiny. Lady Gertrude Montreville had borne many children, the two eldest of which number were the only ones that had arrived beyond the bounds of extreme infancy. Mrs. Davenport's gains and losses on the maternal score bore an exact similitude to her own, and there now only remained to each of them one son and one daughter, to comfort them for the loss of their other children.

WHAT Sir William Montreville is, and what his sister Adelaide Montreville was, I have, reader, to the very best of my little skill, already informed you ; and it now remains that I should bring you acquainted with the son and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Davenport.

MONTAGUE DAVENPORT is as much unlike Sir William Montreville as any two beings, both excellent in their kinds, can differ in what are not the essentials but the ornaments of humanity. The soul and form of Sir William bore testimony to the coincidence of Nature in all her operations : his person was masculine, his spirit intrepid, his countenance animated, his passions fervent, his affections strong, but his understanding stronger.—The body and mind of Montague Davenport were cast in a different mould, and did not altogether preserve the same similitude in their connection with each other. Delicacy had modelled the former with her own dainty fingers, and afterwards polished her work by the hands of the Graces. I do not mean

mean the graces, as they are described and recommended by Lord Chesterfield ; because I do not assimilate them with my own notions of that rectifying grace which should be employed to do away the effects of effeminacy on a too pretty person.—Manly ideas, manly exercises, and manly actions, are the graces which I mean ; and which, with a handsome face, and against a constitution as little robust as his person, formed a striking composition of manliness in the soul of Montague Davenport. The whole world might exclaim with the old lady, who caught a peep of Sir William on his road to Dover—What a noble creature !—Montague, had he passed by, would not have gone without his share of admiration, tho' not attended by the same energy of expression—Instead of crying out, What a noble creature !—it is probable they would have said, How gentle, how amiable, how interesting is the face of that traveller !

SIR William was warm, animated, and ardent, on *all* occasions ; Montague but on *one*, one passion alone could subdue his reason—Love was his tyrant, and the most abject of his slaves was Montague Davenport : his soul floated on affection, that affection centered on one adored object, and that adored object was the daughter of Sir Thomas Montreville.

EMELINE the enchanting—at least Sir William's enchanting Emeline ; for I do not know how far her charms might have gone beyond the precincts of the castle, as there she delighted to exert all her magical

magical powers of fascination—Emeline, the sister of Montague, was hardly less his sister in affection than the sister of Adelaide, the poor Adelaide! whose funeral obsequies were performed in a former part of this wonderful history; for wonderful it will be, if I should ever get to the end of it.

I DON'T know how to describe that sort of sisterly love which united the hearts of Adelaide and Emeline. If I look back, and call upon experience to find me out a precedent for their attachment, though my memory may furnish me with such a beginning, treachery would step in between, and spoil the conclusion. I will not therefore draw my example from Lady ———, or Lady ———, or Lady ———, but from Shakespeare himself, who had not taken a peep into any such hearts as theirs when he wrote the following beautiful lines on female friendship—

In all the council that we two have shared,
 The sister-vows, the hours that we have spent,
 When we have chid the hasty footed time
 For parting us: O! and is all forgot?
 All school day friendship child-hood innocence?
 We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
 Created with our needles both one flower,
 Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion;
 Both warbling of one song, both in one key;
 As if our hands, our sides, our voices, and our minds,
 Had been incorporate. So we grew together
 Like a double cherry, seeming parted,
 But yet a union in partition:

Two

Two lovely berries moulded on one stem,
 So with two seeming bodies, but one heart ;
 Two of the first, like coats of heraldry,
 Due but to one, and crowned with one crest.

So far of the quotation is sufficient for the embellishment of my tale, and the elucidation of my characters ; but I must follow the truth-inspired poet to the very end of his speech, with the hope that his words, issuing from my pen, will pierce, and that to the quick, the hearts of some people who I know will be amongst the number of my readers.

——— You rend our ancient love asunder,
 To join with men in harming your poor friend :
 It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly ;
 Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it ;
 Though I alone do feel the injury.

The three words that I have omitted, and the one that I have substituted, I hope will not pass unobserved ; or the reason why I have used this freedom be unknown to any body. Shakespeare himself has pardoned and acquitted me ; for, does he not say, “ Nothing can be amiss when simplicity and duty tender it ”—It was my own simplicity that made me borrow from his eloquence ; and it is the duty I owe to myself that makes me speak what I have spoken—I now dismiss the present chapter, to give all those, for whom my last quotation is intended, time to consider the truth and consistency of the application I make to them.

C H A P.

C H A P. XXIX.

Struggles of nature, and efforts of love, in a pathetic and interesting conversation.

MY dear William, said Lady Gertrude one day to her son—it was about a fortnight after his return from the ill-fated expedition he made to the continent—have you informed Mrs. Davenport of our—She paused—he caught her half-expressed meaning, and replied, that he had not only informed Mrs. Davenport of all she wished her to know, but had, without orders, ventured to solicit her presence at the castle. I am sure, dear mother, he added, you can have no objection to the sight, or to the soothing attentions of such a friend, who, by sharing your sorrows, will make them more supportable—you love her as a sister, and it is as a sister that I have invited her to attend you; there is not another family in the world, whom, uncommissioned by yourself, I would have dared to intrude on your solitude.

I THANK

I THANK you, returned she, for this proof of kind consideration—I will not say to my peace—that I fear is gone for ever!—and she sighed deeply—but to my resignation, which is often so feeble as to stand in need of a sensible friend's advice to prop and sustain it.

SEEING her son's spirits taking their hue from the complection of her own, she seemed to combat the everlasting expression of her woes, and to force them back to her heart, that they might not produce the same ill effects on his health as they had already done on her own. Yes, continued she, tenderly pressing his hands—Yes, you are certainly right; if I am capable of any other comfort besides what I take in looking at you, in hearing you speak, in witnessing that dutiful anxiety which is so interesting to the fond heart of a mother, if I can bear consolation to approach me in any other shape, I think I should receive it in the society of Mrs. Davenport and her amiable children; they have always held the second place in my heart—Oh! how I feel for their distress when your letter shall arrive—Emeline will think of you, and your idea will support her—but, poor Montague! who is there now that shall speak consolation to the passionate soul of Montague

At the mention of Emeline, the countenance of Sir William Montreville took another very different expression from any colouring it had appeared in since the day of his meeting Lord Fitzhenry at
Dover;

Dover; and his lost sister, who had never been absent from his thoughts till now, was now superseded by the lovely image of Emeline, who till then had modestly withdrawn to the private but warm recesses of his heart, that she might not obtrude on his natural and more serious duties.

As Lady Gertrude pronounced the name of Emeline, the face of Sir William was suffused with crimson, and his eyes struggled with a sort of joyful sensation that he hardly knew how to govern; for it was very plain he tried to suppress this momentary visitation of transport—a sacrifice he would willingly have made to the affliction of his mother; as, who does not know, from experience, that the bite of sorrow is never so keen as when joy unmasked rushes forbidden to its presence?

He could not conceal his feelings so effectually, but that they were instantly revealed to Lady Gertrude's penetrating observation; she also saw his motives for smothering the pleasure she had conveyed to his mind by calling upon the name of his mistress, and so tenderly uniting it with his own.—Something was due on her part for this effort on his; she raised her languid face from the pillow on which it rested, and with the tears yet undried, that had fallen on her pallid cheeks, My son! cried she—my own dear William! your sensibility is strong, but your filial piety stronger; I will not allow you thus to check the generous effusions of a passion ardent and respectable.

Oh

OH dearest of parents ! will you then be comforted ?

YES ! I shall, for your sake, endeavour to moderate my griefs—I will permit you to console me—you cannot recal the angel we have lost, but you shall give me another daughter, and in your Emeline I will try to believe I again embrace my Adelaide !

WHILST this conversation passed between the mother and son, the latter was kneeling at the bedside of the former, a station he seldom quitted when in her presence ; but now he could not have raised himself from it if he would, so greatly was he agitated lest the exertion she was making for his happiness should be fatal to her own existence. He laid his face on her hands, as he pressed them to his lips, and could only murmur in the softest whisper—Spare yourself, dear mother !—I am grateful—oh how grateful ! but for God's sake spare yourself !

This was all he did say—could eloquence itself have said more to the purpose ?

I BEGIN to feel that I am plunging my readers into a sea of difficulties—one can never mend an error till it is found out—I see where I have been deficient, and will bring them out of their dilemma as fast as I can.

A FEW pages back I told you that the Montrevilles and the Davenports were neighbours and inseparable.

inseperable companions ; and just now I have given you cause to suppose the latter have changed their quarters, without having explained the reason why they went away, or to what part of the globe they are gone : any other historian would have introduced this circumstance in its proper time, and in its proper place ; I, on the contrary, who am setting out on a first expedition, run away from unity, and if it overtakes me, I lay hold of the occasion, and accommodate it to my own insufficiencies.

C H A P. XXX.

Sickness—A removal—Death—A re-union—Fortune's eldest daughter a troublesome visitor—A voyage in contemplation.

ABOUT eighteen months before the death of Sir Thomas Montreville, Mrs. Davenport found herself a widow—not merely a widow by appellation, but a widow indeed ; and in truth, her husband had ever been the dearest of all dear objects to the wife of his bosom ; and when it was her misfortune to close his eyes, if Providence had sealed her own at the same time, she would have called it a sentence of mercy.

THE disease by which Mr. Davenport was carried off, in the thirty eighth year of his age, being malignant and highly infectious, the young people, to be out of the way in catching it, were removed to the castle very much against their inclinations : for long they contended to share the same fate with their parents, against their absolute commands, against the verdict of three physicians

cians, who sentenced them to banishment ; against the tenderest solicitations of Sir Thomas and Lady Gertrude Montreville, and against every thing but the extravagant agonies of Sir William, and the unceasing tears of his sister, to which they at last yielded.

Mr. Davenport endeavoured to prevail on his wife to leave the cottage, and go with her children to the castle ; but if there is a wife in the world, who would have complied with such a requisition, flying from the duties of her station to a corner of safety, she deserves not to be classed with such wives, and such mothers, as Lady Gertrude or Mrs. Davenport, who, in refusing to absent herself from the chamber of contagion, was guilty of her very first act of premeditated matrimonial disobedience ! Many fine ladies will not approve of the assertion, but it is a true one.

How this fatal malady ended, you already know ; and I have too many scenes of recent griefs before me, to allow that I should look back, or at least but very slightly, on those sable-hued events that happened so long ago.—A considerable time after the funeral was over, and not until Mrs. Davenport was well assured she had neither received or could convey any infection, once more she was re-united to her family ; not by their coming home to her, but by her going to them : the lord and lady of the castle would not hear of her remaining at the cottage, which their sympa-

thetic feelings told them must now have lost, in her eyes, all its charms, all that it before boasted of beauty and comfort. They went themselves to drag her from the cheerless spot, and she suffered them to conduct her to their own, at that season blisful, habitation.

It has long and often been remarked that the eldest daughter of Fortune seldom comes to the gate of the happy, where she has been long barred out, without a suite of followers in her train: her visits had hitherto been short at the castle and its environs; she had occasionally presided at the interment of several promising infants, but without parade:—she threatened now to invade them with a host of calamities, of which the death of Mr. Davenport was only the herald or harbinger.

THE sum of three thousand pounds to each of his children, with four rings, value two hundred pounds, in remembrance to the Montreville family, were the only legacies bequeathed by Mr. Davenport: all the rest of his moderate fortune was left at the unfettered disposal of his widow, not from any doubts he entertained of the young people's duty to a mother they adored, but as a public acknowledgement of the confidence he reposed in the prudence of her conduct, and the rectitude of her heart.

By this disposition of his worldly effects, Mrs. Davenport's proportion of them was about ten thousand

thousand pounds; for which overplus she considered herself in the light of a steward to her children, on whom her now undivided affections were established, except that part of them which gratitude and friendship laid claim to; and the discharge of these debts of the heart enriched one of the parties, without embezzling from the other.

MR. DAVENPORT, almost from the time of his marriage had been litigating in the Irish courts of law, his rights to some estates of great value, which were left to him by his maternal uncle; but the testator's power of making the bequest was so warmly disputed by his heirs at law, who lived in the country, whose wealth was great, and whose influence was greater, that the claimant had several times nearly given up his pretensions, rather than have the little he did possess made less by supporting them: he was only prevented from the resignation he meditated by Sir Thomas and Lady Gertrude, who would never allow him to make it, and contrived so well, and with so much delicacy, for his accommodation, as to draw him on from year to year, without his being greatly inconvenienced by the expence, or suspecting the weight of obligation he owed to their generous interference. They had often added their entreaties to the advice of his lawyers, that he would shew himself in the country where his interest lay: but having from family occurrences, not necessary to repeat, imbibed an invincible aversion to a kingdom, in which he had never set his foot; nothing could prevail

prevail on him to follow up his claims by his presence.

Mrs. Davenport, in the tenth month of her widowhood received letters from the lawyers who had the whole management of the business to inform her, as the executrix of his late client, that the suit must now come to a crisis, their opponents having carried it as far as they could, and were at this time forced to abide by the decision of a special jury. To which intelligence was added, that the trial would probably come on in three months, and could not be protracted longer than six, and that every thing now seemed to be in their favour. He ended with a request, that Mrs. Davenport would immediately cross the channel, and take up her residence in Dublin, her presence being thought highly necessary, and even indispensable, as the representative of her deceased husband, at the final adjustment of a cause so consequential to herself and family.

Sir Thomas and Lady Gertrude Montreville, whose guest she still was, and without whose approbation she never ventured to take any step of consequence, approved of her inclination to comply with the summons of her lawyer, and to undertake the voyage ; they also insisted that her son and daughter should be left to their protection till her return ; to which arrangement she would gladly have consented, but Montague and Emeline chose to tear themselves from their beloved companions, which
was

was like the separation of the soul from the body, rather than stay behind, when it was possible they might make themselves useful to their mother, and certain at least their personal attendance would add to her comfort.

C H A P.

C H A P. XXXI.

*A pettish lover—A woman firm to her purpose—
Former separations not like the present—Cupid
rocking four infants in his own cradle—Three
parents singing his lullaby to the old-fashioned
tune of disinterested approbation.*

“ The joys of meeting pay the pangs of parting,
“ Else who could bear it ? ”

THIS was a tender address from William Montreville to Emeline Davenport, when he found that all his eloquence, united to her own prepossession in his favour, were ineffectual to weaken those sweet bands of filial affection, by which she was drawn to follow the footsteps of her mother.

How obstinate you are, Emeline ! he would say to her ; is not my father, is not Lady Gertrude, is not Mrs. Davenport equally anxious that you should stay behind ? And yet you will go—yes, you are so self-willed, that I swear I think you would leave
us,

us, if you were convinced that I should not be able to survive your absence.

BUT I am convinced, she would reply, with a forced smile and a suppressed sigh, that nothing so terrible will happen to you, Mr. Montreville.

THAT is more than you have my consent to suppose, *Miss Davenport*! The particular stress he laid on the word *Miss*, and the angry tone of his voice, must, I imagine, have produced some sudden effect on the countenance of her to whom he was speaking: or why should he add, the moment after, in accents of tenderness, *Emeline! Emeline!* is this a time for ceremony?—Just as I am on the point of losing you, perhaps for ever, I ask you, dear *Emeline!*—if this is the season you make choice of to chill me with the freezing appellation of *Mr. Montreville*?

I do not know what was her reply to this unreasonable charge, but the steadfastness with which she continued to hold her resolution of going with her mother, gave him no cause to impute to her a wavering mind, or inconstancy of disposition, when any of her serious duties were to be supported; and though her absence might make him unhappy, the motive which induced it certainly consoled him.

MONTAGUE DAVENPORT made a still greater sacrifice to filial duty, than even his sister, as her passions,

passions, though sufficiently impressed, were not so violent as his, who lived but in the presence of Adelaide, and only existed in her absence.— Nothing can be imagined by the force of fancy so lively, so tender, so interesting, as the adieus of four young people, who were about to be seriously separated, as I may say for the first time in their lives—They had often, it is true, been parted before, but it was only for a short time, and no water divided them; besides, when William and Montague, who pursued their studies together, set out for the school or college, assured that the very day and hour was fixed when they should return back again, their journies were always undertaken with light hearts and cheerful faces, whilst the lovely sisters of these amiable brothers, by the same mode of anticipation, and feasting on the same hope with themselves, would stand at their window, or on the terrace, and see them gallop down the avenue, with no other concern, but the fear, that turning often to look back, they might be thrown from their spirited ponies for want of care, and get their necks dislocated; which idea would make them retire out of their sight to talk over, and count up exactly, how many months, weeks, days, and hours, it would be, before these dear brothers were to animate them again with their welcome presence. How unlike to this sort of short absence was that with which they were now threatened—divided by the ocean, and without any certain termination!

I HOPE

I HOPE I have not told my little love tale so badly, but that my reader has already found out, how Cupid, such as fiction represents him, though truth sometimes tells us he is quite a different sort of person—how the Cupid of fiction rocked these young votaries in his own cradle, attended them in all their infantine sports, making a fifth party in their innocent pastimes; and how, now that they were advancing to maturity, he became a despot, and holding the reins of honour in his hands, drove them, for his diversion, which way he pleased, just as it hit his whimsical fancy; now feasting them on hope, and now starving them on the very dregs of despair.

SIR Thomas and Lady Gertrude Montreville soon discovered what the playful deity was about, and instead of checking his presumption, as many other fathers and mothers might have done, where the inequality of fortune was so conspicuous; they stood the most delighted of all lookers on, except Mrs. Davenport, who, authorised by their approbation, it cannot be supposed beheld it with less joy than themselves; it must be a mother who feels like her, that can tell what were her sensations at the prospect of such desirable alliances for her children; she would not have ventured to lift up her sight to so bright a view of permanent felicity, had it not been pointed out to her by the disinterested and generous parents of William and Adelaide.

From the time the separation of these two families was first determined upon, lassitude and heavy oppression found their way to the castle, and took possession of all the younger part of its inhabitants; the ladies could not fettle themselves to work, to read or to play, they could only think and think only of the solitary ages that must be endured, before the same party might meet again, with the same inclinations, and on the same spot. The gentlemen lost their usual relish for field sports; hunting, shooting, and cricket, were at an end; one might have supposed they had lost too their bodily strength, or were afraid to exert it; every thing fatigued them, and the preparations making for the voyage more than every thing that had fatigued them before; they would speak and not know what they were speaking about, listen and not hear, throw themselves about on the chairs, and declare, though it was early in the month of February, that the weather was so hot it quite unfitted them for all sorts of exercise; yet they too could think, but think only of what their misery would be, were it possible for them to be superseded in the hearts of Adelaide and Emeline.

C H A P. XXXII.

Sympathy a kind physician—Great cordial in small tokens, when love is the giver—Much said about parting, but not half so much as might have been said.

LADY Gertrude, whose soul was a store-house of affection and sympathy, saw and pitied the anxious situation of her tenderly beloved little circle: the next step to observing their concern and feeling it with compassion was to try if it could not be softened: I want, said she one day to Sir Thomas Montreville and Mrs. Davenport, for these dear children to exchange with each other some small memento of kindness, which may act upon them like a talisman and charm away part of that gloom so common to friends in a state of separation—It is hard to conceive what magic power lies concealed in a ring, a locket, or a bracelet, when love is the giver!

BUT

BUT much more in a picture, observed Sir Thomas—Nothing less would have contented me when I was a young man.

YOU are in the right, returned Lady Gertrude, and I wish we were provided with a many! as would content them: we have portraits enough, but unfortunately only one miniature amongst us all, and I shall think it no robbery to steal that one from the watch of Montague's mother, to hang it about the neck of Montague's Adelaide.

MRS. Davenport took the hint, and, with a look of ineffable gratitude, snatched the watch from her side, and unhooked the picture of her son, and presented it to Lady Gertrude, who, when the whole party were assembled together, with her own hands tied it round the neck of her daughter.

ENVY had never shewn her ugly face at the castle, yet if the hearts of William and Emeline had not been strongly barred against her, she might have found an entrance on the present occasion, whilst Montague, the happy Montague, when he saw his own likeness thus disposed of, was for a moment almost annihilated by the force of his transports; and there certainly was not that object on the face of the earth, to whom he would have said, I will exchange conditions with you.

THE other tokens of remembrance chosen by Lady Gertrude, and exchanged by the parties, if not so estimable as a picture would have been, were selected with taste; a gold chronologer was presented by Sir William Montreville to Emeline Davenport: accept it, said he, as the most useless thing I have to bestow upon you; after you have robbed me of yourself, dates and time, what will they be to me but an insupportable burthen, which I shall be glad to get rid of!

At length the day, so fearfully dreaded by them all, broke upon their heavy eyelids, in real splendor but imaginary terrors—In vain the sun brightened every object around them—they could see only the dews of sorrow on the cheeks of each other—They met at the breakfast table, and instead of saying, What a lovely morning! or, what fine weather we shall have for our journey to the Head, Adelaide cried out, as if nature herself had been eclipsed—Oh! how gloomy it is!—Her three associates in the tender passion were far from contradicting the assertion, whilst Lady Gertrude and Mrs. Davenport smiled on each other, and their smiles bore a great deal of meaning.

SIR Thomas Montreville having a cold did not get up to see them set off, but they had all been to carry him their adieus before they assembled in the breakfast room: he said a thousand kind things to Montague and Emeline, embraced them as if they had been his real, as they were his adopted children,

children, bidding them be of good cheer and expect to find no change in the hearts of their friends when they returned to the castle. If they were not able to speak their gratitude, their silence more eloquently explained it.

HERE comes the hearse, muttered William Montreville, when the travelling coach, loaded with trunks, and piled high with imperials, moved slowly up to the door; then, snatching up his hat, and casting a look on Emeline that conveyed a volume of expressions, he would, coward like, have fled from that tremendous monster, a last farewell: but Lady Gertrude called him back to assist the ladies to their carriage; he was too dutiful to refuse the command, and too much agitated to know what he did—so without asking them if they were ready to go, he returned, drew a hand of each under his arm, and dragged them along, as if he had been going to their execution or his own.

EMELINE so contrived, that her tears were concealed by a gauze veil, but could think of no subterfuge to prevent her sobs from penetrating the ears of William,—from whence they found a beaten tract to his heart, and gave him back what he seemed to have lost, the powers of articulation. Dearest Emeline! he cried, this generous compassion shall be the pledge of your fidelity—does it not promise for you, that Montreville shall not be forgotten?

It does! it does! said she, and seated herself by her mother.

WHILST this scene was passing, by the side of the carriage, Adelaide, who had, unobserved, followed her dear companion Emeline as far as the door, but, incapable of an effort so great as seeing those friends depart whom she wished ever to retain, hastily turned back to the room they had just quitted, followed by Montague Davenport.—In all the torture of exquisite agony he threw himself on his knees before her: O God! he exclaimed, what is to be my fate?—what may not happen in this dreadful separation?—what is it that makes me tremble for the future?

Miss Montreville seemed overwhelmed with forebodings, dark as his own, and uttering a deep sigh, cast herself on the bosom of her mother.

Go, my best Montague, said Lady Gertrude, and carry with you the certainty of being beloved—but do not stay now to distress us with your regrets—have you not perceived that we are unequal to the task of combating even with our own?

I SEE, I see my error, said he, and rose hastily, as if he had that moment recollected her tender frame was not made to sustain the weight of his real and imaginary sorrows. Yes, he added, with a fervency

a fervency of devotion, God will protect the angel I am forcing myself to quit, and God will bless you, dearest, kindest Lady Gertrude:—he respectfully kissed the hands of both, as he said these few words ; and, without expecting a reply, followed his mother and sister, who were waiting for him in the carriage, at the door of which stood William Montreville, in a situation not more enviable than his own.

MONTAGUE threw his arm over the shoulder of his perturbed friend, as his foot rested on the step—Farewell, dear Montreville ?—Farewell, dear Davenport !—Take care of Adelaide.—Take care of Emeline—were all the words that they did or perhaps could utter ; and in a few short moments, the dejected travellers were beyond the view of those eyes by which they were eagerly pursued.

HAVING circumstantially explained not only the Davenports' departure, but also their reasons for departing, and drawn a picture which exhibits the last idieus of four innocent hearts, impressed with mutual kindness for each other, pre-determined by fate to last as long as their mutual existence lasted ; I shall take up my story where I layed it down, after the interment of the poor Adelaide, and a little after that period when Lady Gertrude, as she lay on the bed of sickness, asked her son if he had informed the Davenports of their common misfortune.

I AM

I AM now going to Dublin; and, if reader, you are inclined to follow me there, you shall see, not what you shall see every day, scenes of dissipation, or spectacles of delight—but having no printed hand-bills to deliver at the door, if you would know what it is to be known, you must go with me into the exhibition chamber, and there your curiosity will be gratified.

THIS is the way to it.

MONTAGUE DAVENPORT did not hear of Miss Montreville's intended excursion to the continent with that humble submission to the caprice of his destiny, as bespoke him either satisfied or contented; many a heavy sigh, many a sleepless night did the intelligence cost him; he was not afraid of finding a rival, in a native of the country to which he was going, but he was afraid of something, he could hardly tell what.—He thought of the number of fine young men in his own island, who pursue the same track for improvement—it was impossible they should not meet with his idol, and it was more than impossible that they should see her without trying to dispossess him of the place he had in her affections: in short if he was not jealous of shadows, they at least created him a thousand fancied difficulties, and he became a second Don Quixote in trying to vanquish them.—But all his efforts to subdue the demons of supposition might at last have been fruitless, had not his hopes been capitally reinforced by the arrival of another packet from
from

from England, with the agreeable news that Sir Thomas Montreville had set aside his former interdiction of writing, and that he was now at liberty to correspond with his daughter.

Whoever suppose that he did not receive this indulgence with transports of gratitude, would not deserve a similar gratification, if their situation demanded it.—Montague felt himself on this occasion almost as much obliged to the parents of his Adelaide, as when they graciously promised him, that at the end of two years they should be united to each other in those strong and tender bands that cannot be dissevered.

THAT alarming silence which had preceded the accounts of Miss Montreville's decease in a foreign land, was not confined to the castle, but had been extended to Ireland. During five weeks no letter arrived there to Montague, his mother, or his sister; the two latter drooped with apprehension, but carefully hid their fears from the distracted lover, who, like the Spartan boy, concealed, under the cloke of fortitude, the sharp teeth of an enemy that was eating out his vitals. I will wait, said he to his mother, the arrival of one more packet: the wind is now favourable, so may be my fortune; otherwise I must have your permission to seek my happiness from whence only it can be derived—I will go to Adelaide, I will find her out wherever she is—If faithful, you will soon see me again—If she has forgotten me—there he stopped—then added,

added, O God, there is no state of such irritating torture as a state of suspense!

HAVING settled his mind that nothing but hearing from Miss Montreville should prevent him crossing over to the continent in pursuit of her, he bore about his anxiety so philosophically, that it was no where to be discovered, except by starts, such as I just now instanced, in sunk eyes, high beating pulse, feverish heats, and a fallowness not natural to his complexion.

THE guarded letter written to Mrs. Davenport by Sir William, to announce the death of his sister, was not the channel by which they first became acquainted with their misfortune. Swift are the pinions charged with woe, and too swift arrived the expected packet in the bay of Dublin—The family are assembled at breakfast—the English papers, as usual, brought into the room: Montague, starting from his chair, enquires if there are no letters—the servant says there are none, lays down the papers, and retires

I CAN bear it no longer—cried the impatient lover of Adelaide.—Mother, sister, if you have dispatches to send by me, get them ready to-day, for to-morrow I will not be in this country.

I KNOW your intentions said Mrs. Davenport, and do not mean to oppose them; all I ask is, that
you

you will first go to the castle and consult with Lady Gertrude : it is a compliment her goodness to you has made indispensable ; you owe it also to the delicacy of her daughter's situation.

I know it, I know it, he replied, and will do nothing without Lady Gertrude's consent—she will not refuse it—her heart is too much like your own to bid me desist from finding out what is become of Adelaide.



END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.